

RELIGIOUSNESS AND SPIRITUALITY: HOW ARE THEY
RELATED TO MORAL ORIENTATIONS?

Elizabeth A. Gabhart, MS

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APPROVED:

Gabriel Ignatow, Major Professor
George Yancey, Committee Member
Gul Seckin, Committee Member
Daniel Rodeheaver, Chair of the Department of
Sociology
David Holdeman, Dean of the College of Arts
and Sciences
Victor Prybutok, Dean of the Toulouse
Graduate School

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This dissertation examines correlations between religiousness and spirituality, to moral orientations using moral foundations theory as a framework. Using the 2012 Measuring Morality dataset, which provides a representative sample of the population of the United States, I create linear regressions which test associations between religiousness, spirituality, and each of the five moral foundations ((harm/care, fairness, in-group loyalty, respect for authority, and purity). I find that religiousness is negatively associated with concern for harm, and positively associated with respect for authority, a finding which implies that the moral behavior of religious people is rooted in respect for authority more than in any other moral concern. Spirituality is positively associated with concern for fairness. The implications of all findings are discussed, as well as limitations and recommendations for future research.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

In this study, I examine the moral orientations of Americans using their self-identified religiousness and spirituality, using moral foundations theory. Moral foundations theory hypothesizes that liberals and conservatives differ in moral decision-making, but this study will be the first to test differences between religious and spiritual groups (Haidt & Graham 2007). Therefore, I expect to find correlations between religiousness, spirituality, and moral orientation.

Although many researchers of religion have suggested that the use of ‘spirituality’ as a separate but often co-occurring concept with ‘religion’ might shed light on the modern faith experience, few researchers have examined religiousness and spirituality together and in depth (Pargament 1999). In the United States today, the word ‘religion’ is associated with organization, authority, hierarchies, and rituals. In contrast, the word ‘spirituality’ connotes an inner, personal experience which may or may not be associated with either religious organization or a deity (Fuller 2001; Miller & Thoresen, 2003; Pargament 1999; Pargament 2007; Zinnbauer et al. 1997). This study will help researchers understand the role and influence of religiousness and spirituality as separate, but co-occurring concepts, in the moral decision-making of modern Americans.

Purpose of the Study and Research Question

The general purpose of this dissertation is to understand the role that religiousness and spirituality play in the moral decision-making of everyday Americans. Using moral foundations

theory, I determine how religiousness and spirituality are associated with the five moral foundations: harm/care, fairness, in-group loyalty, respect for authority, and purity. Although morality has long been assumed to be rooted in religious and spiritual beliefs, very little research examines the role religiousness and spirituality play in moral decision-making. The academic study of morality plays an important role in helping societies encourage prosocial behavior by illuminating the factors behind moral decision-making (Haidt 2008).

Definition of Important Terms

The definitions of the words ‘religion’ and ‘spirituality’ are contested by Americans, a situation highlighted by the research debate about whether spirituality and religion are distinct, or overlapping concepts. The term “morality” draws on both the sociology and psychology of morality for its definition.

Defining Spirituality and Religion: Distinct or Overlapping Concepts?

Academic researchers have struggled for a century to define religion, and most importantly, to understand how average Americans define the word (Pargament 1999). However, the struggle to define spirituality is relatively new, gaining prominence with the rise of the concept of spirituality in public consciousness. Researchers disagree on the extent to which the concepts are distinct, or overlapping (Reich 2000). I begin by relating research suggesting that among Americans, spirituality and religion are distinct concepts, and contrast it with another body of literature which views spirituality and religion as intimately connected, overlapping concepts. Finally, I describe the attempts to synthesize these two perspectives.

Spirituality and religion as distinct concepts. In the United States, both academia and popular culture often discuss religion and spirituality as though they are separate, mutually

exclusive concepts (Ammerman 2013; Daly 2005; Heelas, Woodhead, Seel, Tustin, & Szerszynski 2005). Researchers who find that the concepts are distinct find that Americans associate religion with orthodoxy and authoritarianism, but associate spirituality with personal belief, mysticism, authenticity, and New Age beliefs and practices (Fuller 2001; Miller & Thoresen, 2003; Pargament 1999; Pargament 2007; Zinnbauer et al. 1997). Although many academic scholars continue to use the terms 'spirituality' and 'religiousness' as though they were synonymous, others suggest that the terms are used in increasingly distinct ways by Americans (Dein 2005). Religion is generally seen as referring to institutions (such as churches) and their hierarchies, prescribed rituals, and religious authority (Zinnbauer et al. 1997). In contrast, the word spirituality is often seen as a personal, mystical experience, an inner quest, a search for meaning, or a relationship with a higher power. A spiritual experience is thought to be achieved through solitary, transcendent activities such as meditation, prayer, or the use of a mantra.

The most thorough examination of how Americans use the terms 'spirituality' and 'religion' was undertaken by Zinnbauer et al. (1997), who surveyed a non-representative sample of Americans from widely divergent religious backgrounds to define the terms 'spiritual' and 'religious' in open-ended questions. Thematic coding revealed that, in order from most frequent to least frequent themes, 'spiritual' was defined as connectedness with a higher power; personal beliefs; demonstrating God's love to others; attaining a positive inner state; and personal growth. In contrast, 'religious' was defined as (again from most frequent to least frequent themes) personal belief in a higher power; attendance; membership; performance of rituals; commitment to dogma; following God's will and demonstrating God's love to others; personal worship practices; and feeling superior to others or avoiding responsibility. While this study reveals some small overlap between the two concepts, such as both being used to refer to personal beliefs and

demonstrating God's love to others, the bulk of both definitions is divergent. In general, religion is perceived as institutional, while spirituality is perceived as personal and subjective. This finding has been duplicated among homosexuals surveyed at a gay pride parade (Halkitis 2009), Scottish practitioners of alternative spirituality practices (Glendinning & Bruce 2006), African-American women (Mattis 2000), and Canadian healthcare workers (Pesut & Reimer-Kirkham 2010). Although it is suggestive that divergent definitions of religion and spirituality have been found among such disparate social groups, to date no such research has been published using a representative sample of Americans. As discussed later in this paper, some researchers hypothesize that different social groups may use the words religion and spirituality in different ways, so a representative sample is still needed.

Researchers who argue that religion and spirituality are distinct concepts not only point to definitional distinctions, but also claim that the people who adopt each label are distinct psychological groups. For example, 'spiritual but not religious' Americans have different dispositions than those who are 'spiritual and religious' (Saucier & Skrzypinska 2006). People who emphasize spirituality over religiousness are more absorption- and fantasy-prone, and value eccentricity and subjective experience more than traditionally religious people. In contrast, those who are traditionally religious value rituals and rules more, and are more authoritarian, more traditional, less individualistic, and less open to new experiences. Because Saucier & Skrzypinska's research only compared traditionally religious people with spiritual but not religious people, it is impossible to be certain whether the distinctions they find are a result of embracing religion or rejecting spirituality, but their research is suggestive that spirituality and religion are associated with distinct psychological patterns.

Those who see religion and spirituality as distinct concepts often assume that the term ‘spirituality’ is used to describe aspects of Eastern religious practices such as meditation and mantra chanting, and concepts such as transcendence and enlightenment (Pargament 1999). According to this view, globalization has introduced Americans to a wide variety of religious ideas that are often labeled ‘New Age’ in the United States. Fuller (2001) disagrees, arguing in his qualitative analysis of spiritual but not religious Americans that nonreligious spiritual traditions have always been a part of the religious/spiritual landscape of the United States. Fuller points to the metaphysical traditions practiced by the Founding Fathers and earliest colonizers, and argues that eclectic spiritual seekers have always eschewed religious organizations unless those organizations are perceived as fulfilling their own individual spiritual searches.

However, the idea that spirituality is associated with New Age and metaphysical beliefs is contested. It is true that Americans who identify as ‘spiritual but not religious’ are more likely to use alternative medicine, meditation, or spiritual healing than any other religious/spiritual group (Ellison, Bradshaw, & Roberts 2012). However, no other associations between spirituality and New Age beliefs have been found. Pew Forum (2012) has found no quantitative evidence that religious Nones, people who have no religion, are more drawn toward New Age beliefs than the general public. Perhaps spiritual but not religious Americans, a subset of Nones, are more drawn to New Age beliefs and practices than other Nones, but their New Age tendencies are not discernible when categorized along with other Nones in quantitative analysis. Alternatively, it may be that Fuller’s more qualitative research approach unintentionally biased his work toward a particular subset of spiritual Americans who lean toward New Age beliefs more than the average spiritual Americans. Americans who could be most easily identified as spiritual but not religious by a qualitative researcher may not be representative of most Americans who embrace

spirituality but reject religion. Therefore, the connection between self-identified spirituality and New Age beliefs remains unclear.

Another hypothesis which supports the idea that religiousness and spirituality are completely distinct concepts claims that spiritual may be a new label used by non-believers. This idea is rooted in the discrimination which atheists experience, but the relative lack of discrimination against people who identify as spiritual. Perhaps people who have lost their religious faith are reluctant to self-identify with the labels 'atheist', 'agnostic' or 'non-believer', and so they identify as spiritual in order to deflect questions about their moral character. Although it is well-established that atheists, agnostics, and non-believers experience heavy discrimination in the United States, it is not yet known whether the label 'spiritual' is widely used to avoid discrimination. Cragun et al. (2012) hypothesizes that many non-religious people may be unwilling to disclose their lack of religion because of discrimination, but there is no direct evidence supporting this hypothesis. Indirect evidence suggests it may be true; a higher percentage of Americans do not believe in God than self-identify as atheist, and Americans view 'nonreligious' people relatively warmly (Putnam 2010). Alternatively, some Americans may not believe in God, and refuse to identify as atheists not because of fear of discrimination, but because they have not yet personally accepted the atheist label. Smith (2011) finds that the process toward atheism usually involves stages including questioning theism, rejecting theism, and finally labeling oneself an 'atheist'. Therefore, a person may spend some period of time disbelieving in God but not yet identifying as atheist. Whether the lack of identification as atheist is a result of fear of discrimination, or a temporary stage people pass through when losing their faith, some Americans may self-identify as spiritual even when they do not adhere to any

supernatural belief or faith practice. If this is the case, the gulf between people who identify as ‘religious’ and those who identify as ‘spiritual’ may be extremely wide.

Religion and spirituality as overlapping concepts. Many studies treat religion and spirituality as overlapping but not identical concepts, either explicitly or implicitly (Chatters et al. 2008; Mohoney & Graci 1999; Saucier & Skrzypinska 2006). Some research finds the concepts of religion and spirituality are much more overlapping than the previous view predicts, with *spirituality* signifying broadly shared experiences such as the desire for a purposeful life and awe in the presence of natural beauty, and *religiousness* associated with rituals and behaviors rooted in spirituality (Ammerman 2013; Casey 2013; Chatters et al. 2008; Chaves 2011; Hill et al. 2000; Hyman & Handal 2006; Shahabi et al. 2002). This view is often rooted in the fact that most Americans describe themselves as both religious and spiritual (Chaves 2011). Americans who describe themselves as religious are more likely than those who are not religious to also describe themselves as spiritual and vice versa (Shahabi et al. 2002). Given the strong correlation between self-identification as religious or spiritual, some researchers argue that the meanings of these words are intertwined, though not usually interchangeable.

One of these viewpoints sees religion and spirituality as nested concepts. Casey (2013) argues that historically in the Western world, the word ‘religious’ was applied to all but the most reprobate sinners; the adjective that applied to most people by virtue of simply being born in a Christian nation. The word ‘Catholic,’ so long used by the European Christian church, reflects the notion that religiousness is a near-universal trait of all born within the geographic borders of the church. Even after the Protestant Revolution, social norms dictated that everyone in the United States and Europe engage in religious ritual, especially on important occasions, holidays, and life events, and regardless of personal belief. The word ‘spiritual’ described people who

were especially dedicated to religious practice, such as priests, monks, nuns, and saints. To call someone ‘spiritual’ was to acknowledge their higher level of devotion and morality, superior to the average person who was merely ‘religious’. Therefore, through most of English-speaking European history, most Westerners would have called themselves ‘religious’ no matter their beliefs, and most would not have self-identified as ‘spiritual’. For most of Western history, the word ‘religious’ was a broad umbrella term, and ‘spirituality’ was a subset of religiousness.

Casey (2013) argues that in the 1960s, the historical relationship between the concepts of religiousness and spirituality began to flip. Today, most Westerners might call themselves spiritual, but only a subset of those most likely to regularly engage in religious rituals or feel most loyal to religious organizations consider themselves religious. Other researchers observing modern life agree; Hill et al. (2000) finds that spirituality is generally considered a broader concept than religion, and its definition encompasses religion. People who have little or no interest in deities, religious organizations, or ritual practices may call themselves spiritual to signify their sense of awe in the presence of beauty, a fleeting feeling of connectedness with nature, or a desire to live a purposeful life (Ammerman 2013). The modern definition of spirituality is broader than it once was; most modern Americans feel they can identify with a spiritual existence. The modern definition of religion has shrunk to mean only those people who belong to religious organizations, engage in religious ritual, and frequently engage in faith-based practices. According to the view that religion and spirituality are overlapping concepts, people who self-identify as religious are assumed to also be spiritual because religious rituals and behaviors are thought to be rooted in spirituality (Shahabi et al. 2002). Rather than viewing religion and spirituality as mostly-separate concepts with a few commonalities, these scholars view the two terms as intertwined, with religion as a subset of the concept of spirituality.

Synthesis between the Two Views. Certain scholars believe that religion and spirituality are distinct concepts with few points of commonality, while others believe that religion is a subset of spirituality. This apparent contradiction in academic literature may be the result of researchers surveying different groups of Americans who defining spirituality and religion in different ways. Specifically, the word 'spiritual' is defined differently by Americans depending on the frequency of their religious service attendance as well as their denominational affiliation. Ammerman (2013) finds that Americans who attend religious services as often or more often than the national average, as well as those who belong to Protestant, Mormon, and evangelical groups, are more likely to define spirituality as an extension of religious ritual and organizational belonging. In contrast, Americans who attend religious services infrequently, as well as Jews, neo-Pagans, and Catholics, define spirituality in opposition to religion, as individual seeking, mystical experiences, and transcendence. Cohen and Hill (2007) agree that the meanings of the word 'spiritual' are contested, but disagree with Ammerman's specific finding, arguing instead that Protestants are most likely to use the term 'spirituality' to signify their religious individualism, while Catholics are most likely to use the term 'spirituality' as synonymous with their more collectivist religious orientation.

Unsurprisingly, Americans who identify as 'spiritual but not religious' (SBNR) are most likely to define spirituality and religion in opposition to one another, with religion perceived pejoratively (Ammerman 2013). People who identify as SBNR associate the word spirituality with a non-material dimension of existence, personal experience, a universal core of all religions, and a belief in a higher presence (Streib 2008). Fuller (2001) finds that SBNR respondents view spirituality as a "sensibility," "a particular mode of perceiving and responding to the world," which "...[cultivates] a mystical feel for God's presence in the natural world." In addition,

SBNR respondents are more likely to define religion in pejorative ways, such as: a way to feel superior to others, a way to avoid responsibility for one's actions, or mindlessly accepting authoritarian tradition (Ammerman 2013). In contrast, some Americans perceive spirituality pejoratively, associating it with a neoliberal trend to privatize religion by selling books, retreats, seminars, and other products with spirituality lending an "aura of authenticity" (Carrette & King 2005, p. 16). Although little research has been done to examine this group, presumably these religious Americans who perceive spirituality negatively would self-identify as religious, but not spiritual. Most Americans self-identify as both religious and spiritual, a group which is most likely to feel the concepts are closely related and to have positive associations with both (Zinnbauer 1997).

If this synthesis between the two views is correct, then whether researchers find that Americans believe spirituality and religion are distinct concepts, or that the concepts are similar and overlapping, depends largely upon research design. Conservative Americans, those who belong to religious organizations, and those who self-identify as both religious and spiritual may be expected to define the terms in strongly overlapping, nested ways, or even to use the terms synonymously. Liberal Americans, those who do not belong to religious organizations, and those who do not self-identify as both religious and spiritual may be expected to define the terms as very distinct, most often viewing religion pejoratively and spirituality positively. The majority of spiritual but not religious Americans fall into the latter group (Ammerman 2013).

Although most Americans self-identify as both spiritual *and* religious, these concepts are clearly both important aspects of the modern faith experience. Some research examines spiritual but not religious Americans, but this strand of research is limited because it does not examine the full range of religiousness and spirituality, from full acceptance to full rejection of these concepts

(Shahabi 2002). A thorough analysis of the interaction between religion and spirituality in the lives of Americans is needed to understand these important concepts.

Defining Morality

Morality is much easier to define than are religion and spirituality, as the term is not as popularly contested by Americans. The earliest moral psychologists did not attempt to define morality, instead relying on lists of behaviors (such as helping others) which the psychologists believed related to morality (Blasi 1994). The shared characteristics of different moral behaviors were not recognized and so each moral behavior was considered in isolation. As the field of moral psychology evolved, academics began to understand morality less as a series of behaviors and more rooted in the intentions behind behavior. This shift matched the popular perception that well-meaning behavior is not immoral, even if it unintentionally causes harm or otherwise violates moral codes. The academic debate between morality defined as behavior and morality defined as intention is mostly-settled in favor of definitions including intention.

However, the definition of morality continues to be contested among academics along other ideological fault lines: normative or descriptive definitions (Luco 2014). Many philosophical treatises describe morality normatively, as it ought to be, a code of conduct assumed to be sanctioned by all sane, rational people. In contrast, most social scientists studying morality approach the subject descriptively, reporting only how individuals or social groups perceive morality, ideally without any judgment from the researcher. Durkheim (1933) was perhaps the most prominent of the early social scientists who insisted on a descriptive approach to morality. He did not deny that universal moral laws may exist, writing, “Possibly, there is an eternal law of morality, written by some transcendental power,” (p. 423). However, his argument rests on the idea that human scientists, each saddled with their own biases, should attempt only to

recognize and categorize moral facts with an attitude similar to a biologist who categorizes physiological types (p. 432). According to Durkheim, a researcher should only consider moral behavior to be “abnormal” if the behavior is condemned by the relevant social group. Many social scientists after Durkheim, including those most closely associated with moral foundations theory, agree that descriptive morality is most useful for scientific research.

This dissertation uses moral foundations theory, relying on a descriptive definition of morality given in a seminal text describing the theory. In *The Righteous Mind*, one of the founders of moral foundations theory, Jonathan Haidt (2012) defines morality this way: “Moral systems are interlocking sets of values, virtues, norms, practices, identities, institutions, technologies, and evolved psychological mechanisms that work together to suppress or regulate selfishness and make cooperative societies possible,” (p. 314). This definition of morality is similar to the definitions given by other researchers studying morality, who find normative definitions difficult to study scientifically. For example, Erhard, Jensen, and Zaffron (2014) define morality thusly: “In a given society, in a given era of that society, morality is the generally accepted standards of what is desirable and undesirable; of right and wrong conduct, and what is considered by that society as good behavior and what is considered bad behavior of a person, group, or entity,” (p. 2).

Whether or not most social scientists privately believe in a universal code of conduct, scientific research requires that researchers operationalize morality as objectively as possible. While this statement may seem too obvious to mention to some, many esteemed sociologists argue that social science is inevitably driven by researchers’ moral philosophies, which are impossible to separate from facts sufficiently to ensure objectivity (Abend 2008). However, as Abend argues persuasively, it is possible for social scientists to concern themselves more with

morality *as it exists*, rather than as the researcher believes morality *ought to be*. In fact, well-constructed social science research which carefully describes moral differences between social groups and the causes of those differences rarely lends itself to supporting moral pronouncements. For example, a social science study which describes as objectively as possible the reasoning of pro-life and pro-choice groups may increase an initially-biased reader's sympathy for the "opposite" argument. While social science researchers cannot hope to be totally unbiased themselves, they can create research which describes social life in as an objective way as possible, a worthy project. Therefore, this paper aims to achieve an objective description of moral decision-making. I use Haidt's descriptive, non-normative definition of morality which views morality as rooted in the smooth operation of societies.

Outline of Research

What follows is an empirical test of the associations between religiousness, spirituality, and morality. Chapter 2 provides a literature review of including popularly-assumed links between religion, spirituality, and morality; an overview of the fracturing of the American religious landscape, the reasons for the fracturing, and the effects of it; a review of the academic study of morality; and a justification for the control variables included. Chapter 3 focuses on methodology by listing the hypotheses used, describing the data, and the data analysis. Chapter 4 provides results of descriptive statistics, bivariate correlations, and linear regressions, as well as a discussion of the implications of those results. Chapter 5 concludes this research by summarizing the findings, describing assumptions and limitations, and suggesting future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW OF RELIGION, SPIRITUALITY, AND MORALITY

Introduction

This literature review is divided into four major sections. First, I begin by describing the popularly-assumed links between morality, religion, and spirituality, focusing on: historical links, popular perceptions, and academic data. Second, I review literature associated with religion and spirituality. I justify the use of spirituality as well as religion in this study by recounting the fracturing of organized religion within the United States and the confusing modern religious landscape. I describe the two most prominent theories explaining why people in the United States have become so much more difficult to categorize religiously – rising individualism, and unhappiness with the marriage of politics and religion. Third, I turn my literature review toward morality. In this study, I use moral foundations theory, so I describe previous academic theories of morality, and explain moral foundations theory itself. Fourth, I review academic literature associated with the control variables used in this study to justify their inclusion in this study.

Religion and Spirituality: The Roots of Morality?

An article written by a professor of ecology and evolution was posted to the USAToday online forum in August, 2011 defending the controversial idea that people can be moral without believing in God (Coyne 2011). The author wrote about instinctively helping someone who slipped on ice despite being an atheist with no expectation of spiritual reward. The idea that people can be moral without religion is perceived as being need of defense precisely because the opposite concept is popular; many Americans tacitly or overtly assume that their moral codes

flow directly from their religious and/or spiritual practices. But is this assumption factual? In this section of the literature review, I describe the historical links between religion, spirituality, and morality, and then examine the modern popular perception and then social science data on the subject.

Historical Links between Religion, Spirituality, and Morality

Most modern societies assume a link exists between morality, and religious/spiritual practices, a fact that makes the lack of research into religion and spirituality using moral foundations theory surprising. However, the modern popular association between morality and religion/spirituality is a relatively new development in the evolution of human societies (Henrich et al. 2010; Wright 2009). The earliest human societies had conceptions of morality, and conceptions of religion, but these two realms were not associated with one another. The supernatural beings described by small, simple societies tended to be less powerful and more morally ambiguous than the modern conception of deities. Small societies had moral codes, but moral violations were not perceived to be a concern of the gods. Instead they were perceived as a social problem, to be dealt with by that society's members (Roes & Raymond 2003). Gods were not conceptualized as moral standard-bearers, but instead were sometimes seen as the arbiters of capricious fate. Therefore, among hunting and gathering tribes, the supernatural world and the moral world were disconnected.

The invention of agriculture brought with it larger societies and an evolution in religion, as gods were said to punish thieves, murderers, and adulterers with accident or illness. However, the gods continued to be perceived as local, whimsical beings who, at best, required prosocial behavior only toward others in ones' social group (Wright 2009). As societies grew, their gods grew in power and in their interest in punishing wrongdoing and rewarding good deeds (Roes &

Raymond 2003). Using a representative sample of 186 different societies, Johnson (2005) finds that the larger and more complex societies are, the more likely their members are to espouse belief in an omniscient deity who punishes bad behavior, even if that behavior remains secret to the evildoer's peers. This pattern seems to be the result of societies' attempts to encourage prosocial behavior among their members, even in the absence of monitoring by peers. While the gods of agricultural societies were perceived as more powerful and more moral than the gods of hunter-gatherer societies, agricultural societies' gods were not yet conceptualized as the creators and arbiters of all morality and justice.

Ancient philosophers sometimes puzzled over the connection between religion, spirituality, and morality, Socrates perhaps most famously. He asked about God's relationship with holiness, (Hare 2009, p. 10) He argued that if good is defined as whatever God wants, then "goodness" is arbitrary, decided by a god who may order genocide or torture and call it "righteousness." On the other hand, if goodness exists outside of God, then morality is a law higher than God. This conundrum continues among moral philosophers up to the present day, with one school of thought (called meta-ethical moral relativist) arguing that morality is merely a social construct created and defended by religious leaders with a variety of motives, while the opposing school of thought (called moral universalist) insists that moral principles are universal and timeless (Aarnio & Peczenik 1996; Hare 2009; Schneewind 1998). This dissertation uses moral foundations theory, which argues that because all humans share a common evolutionary history, all societies rely on a small set of moral foundations to guide decision-making. Moral foundations theory makes no claim supporting either meta-ethical moral relativism or moral universalism because it does not make any claims about God, nor does it claim to understand morality outside of human existence.

Popular Perception of Religion, Spirituality, and Morality

Most people globally link morality with religion and spirituality. Majority populations of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East say that a person must believe in God to be moral (Pew Research 2007). Western Europeans are more accepting of non-belief, with majorities in those countries feeling that morality is disconnected from religion. Sentiment in the United States falls between either extreme; fifty-seven percent say that belief in God is necessary for morality, while forty-one percent say it is not. Interestingly, popular perception of moral standards for adults seem to vary from standards for children, as most Americans claim that children need religious instruction to grow up to be moral adults (Farkas, Johnson, & Foleno 2001).

The popular perception that morality is rooted in religion leads to discrimination against non-religious people, who are assumed to be immoral (Gervais 2013). Non-religious people experience employment discrimination, slander, refusal of service, social ostracism, and even hate crimes (Cragun et al. 2012; Hammer, Cragun, Hwang, & Smith 2012). More than any other racial, religious, or immigrant group, Americans feel that atheists do not share their American values, and they would not like their children to marry atheists (Edgell, Gerteis, & Hartmann 2006). Quantitative research finds that Americans associate atheism with immoral acts such as serial murder, consensual incest, necrobestiality, and cannibalism (Gervais 2014). Qualitative research reveals that Americans associate atheism with a host of vices: drug addiction, prostitution, materialism, elitism, selfishness, criminality, and individualism (Edgell, Gerteis, & Hartmann 2006). These associations are rooted in the fact that many Americans believe that morality is endowed by a divine Creator, with religion as the mechanism humans use to understand and enforce divine morality. Even moderately-religious Americans trust deeply-

religious Americans more than they trust non-religious Americans (Putnam 2010). Only progressive Christians feel more affinity toward atheists than toward fundamentalists (Yancey 2017). Atheists and non-religious Americans are popularly assumed to be immoral because morality is so strongly associated with religion in popular imagination.

Academic Data Linking Religion, Spirituality, and Morality

Religion changed and developed as societies attempted to encourage pro-social behavior among members, but does religion really function in a pro-social way? Can social scientists expect more moral behavior from people who are religious than those who are not religious? And what sort of moral behavior can be expected of those who reject religion but embrace spirituality? The evidence from social science research is mixed.

Research on the association between spirituality (excluding religiousness) and morality is thin; most uses the term “spirituality” as synonymous with religious faith and much of it explores its value in therapeutic settings (Doherty 2009; Drescher et al. 2011; Spezzano & Gargiulo 1997; Walker 2003). Much more research explores the link between religion and morality than between spirituality and morality, an oversight that this paper attempts to help remedy.

Social science data suggests that for most people, morality exists outside of and above religious rules and norms. For example, Catholic, Amish-Mennonite, and Jewish children insist that even if God commanded stealing, theft would continue to be an immoral action (Nucci & Turiel 1993). Psychology of morality researcher Lawrence Kohlberg (1981) said that morality and religion are not linked because, he argued, morality is rational while religion is non-rational submission to religious authority. However, more recent research disagrees with Kohlberg, suggesting that he misunderstood both morality and religion (Getz 1984; Vitell et al. 2009). Moral decision-making is not primarily rational, but instead is fixed within moral identity, a

person's conception of their own character and how they 'ought' to behave (Vitell et al. 2009). Each person's moral identity is molded throughout their lifetimes, with religion being one of several primary sources of moral identity norms and values.

Although moral codes do not seem to be wholly created by religion, religion influences morality and may increase moral behavior (Ahmed 2008; Clark & Dawson 1996). Religion may be one of the most important tools society uses to help individuals extend the boundary of evolved kin-directed altruism out to the larger society (Batson 1983). Religion is one of several important variables (such as politics, culture, and the legal system) influencing moral decision-making (Hunt & Vitell 2006; Narvaez, Getz, Rest, & Thoma 1999). Unsurprisingly, different kinds of religiousness are associated with different kinds of morality (Cottone, Druker, & Javier 2007). Scriptural literalism is associated with moral codes that aim to maintain social order and often rely on stereotyped notions of good and evil. In contrast, a more quest-oriented religiousness is associated with post-conventional morality, which establishes moral principles (such as human rights) and is willing to disrupt social order to do perceived good (Cottone, Druker, & Javier 2007; Sapp & Jones 1986). Similarly, Duriez & Soenens (2006) find that people who interpret their entire religions more literally (not only scriptural literalism) make less sophisticated moral judgments than those who interpret their religions symbolically.

In addition, different levels of commitment to religion are also associated with different ethical decision-making (Vitell, Singh, & Paolillo 2006). Religious people who believe sincerely and whose faith infuses their daily lives are likely to judge morally ambiguous business and financial situations as "immoral." In contrast, religious people who use religion for status, social networking and support, or personal comfort only in difficult times are likely to justify taking advantage in morally 'gray' situations. Further research refines this difference: using data from

over 60,000 respondents in 44 countries, Parboteeah, Hoegl, and Cullen (2008) find that willingness to justify immoral behavior is negatively correlated with submission to religious authority, emotional attachment to religion, frequent religious service attendance, and prayer. Surprisingly, self-identified belief does not have the same effect on willingness to justify immoral behavior, indicating that simply professing religious allegiance is not predictive of ethical behavior, but deeply-held faith is predictive.

Psychologists find that people use religion as a tool to increase self-control, thereby increasing both empathy and virtuous behavior (Geyer & Baumeister 2005; Wain & Spinella 2007). For example, research participants primed with religious words were less likely to cheat on a difficult task than participants not primed with religious words (Randolph-Seng & Nielsen 2007). These findings may explain why people in cultures which teach that a supernatural being punishes evildoers are more likely to believe that committing moral transgressions is never permissible under any circumstances (Atkinson & Bourrat 2011).

On the other hand, some evidence suggests that religion increases pro-social behavior within a group, but may encourage group members to reject those outside the group (Galen 2012). Kind behavior toward others is strongly predicted by whether or not they are perceived to be part of one's own religious group, a categorization which people engage in quickly and spontaneously (Ben-Ner, McCall, Stephane, & Wang 2009; Tan & Vogel 2008; Weeks & Vincent 2007). For example, the more fundamentalist Christians are, the more likely they are to have negative attitudes toward Muslims (Rowatt, Franklin, & Cotton 2005). Astoundingly, bias favoring one's religious in-group persists whether the evaluated person behaves positively or negatively; perception of religious camaraderie trumps a group member's bad behavior (Hunter 2001). In addition, the only religious category of people in the United States who consistently

expresses low levels of racism are those who reject religion (Hall, Matz, & Wood 2010).

Approval of war, perhaps the most extreme expression of in-group loyalty and lack of concern for opposing groups, is highest among religious Americans (Connors, Leonard, & Burnham 1968).

Some research disagrees altogether with the hypothesis that religion increases prosocial behavior, whether in-group or out-group. Galen (2012) argues that the prosocial effects of religiousness so commonly found by social scientists are an artifact of shoddy research design, methodological problems, socialization bias, stereotype endorsement, and other issues inherent in many experimental designs. For example, Galen points out that although religious people are more likely to claim that they will help strangers, many non-lab, real-world experiments have found that religious people are no more likely to help others than non-religious people. In fact, multiple studies find that religious people are much more likely than non-religious people to want to appear helpful in front of others, even when doing so creates difficulty for the person who needs help. It is possible that the social pressure inherent in most social science research creates a body of research which false attributes prosociality to religion.

Religion and Spirituality

This dissertation breaks with previous literature by not only examining links between religiousness and morality, but also spirituality and morality. This section of the literature review defends the decision to include both religiousness and spirituality as dependent variables by highlighting the fact that religiousness alone is too unidimensional to capture the modern faith experience. Although religion may have once been hegemonic enough in the United States to stand alone in research examining faith, the religious landscape has become much more complicated recently. I begin by describing the relative unity of pre-1960s religious America, its

post-1960s fracturing, and the bewildering array of modern faith options which confront social scientists wanting to understand religion. Next, I describe two major hypotheses explaining why this fracturing happened. Finally, I defend the notion that researchers may use ‘spirituality’ in addition to ‘religiousness’ to give additional clarity to studies of American faith.

Historical Background: The Fracturing of American Organized Religion

The story of the fracturing of American organized religion begins with a relatively unified Christian religious landscape created at the founding of the United States as a nation. Before a national government existed, the earliest European colonists, often fleeing religious persecution, came to the New World and set up colonies with official religions (Bonomi 2003; Smith 2002). Although many had been persecuted for their beliefs in Europe, it was their turn to persecute all perceived “heresy,” defined as opposition to their own narrow beliefs. However, conflicts between colonies were intrareligious, as almost everyone within the colonies was Christian. Not only were most European migrants Christian, but most of the black slaves and many of the Native Americans they interacted with quickly converted as well (Bonomi 2003).

Colony governments slowly realized that they must unify as one nation for economic benefit and military protection, but balked at the prospect of compromising their religious stances (Johnstone 2007). The United States Constitution, which was a compromise between states with different political, economic, and religious ideologies, declared that the new nation of unified states would have no official religion. Although American religion remained highly fractured between competing Christian denominations, the Constitution was the first, and perhaps most important, step toward national religious unity. Animosity between the majority Protestant country, and minority Catholics, increased in the mid-1800s in a wave of “no-popery” sentiment, but died down again soon after the Civil War.

From the late 1800s until around 1965, America can comfortably be referred to as a “Christian” nation. Its most divisive debates were between Christians who emphasized social good works, and Christians who emphasized spiritual salvation (Johnstone 2007). Between 1940 and 1959, church membership increased, reaching a historic high of 63.6 percent (p. 306). The national mood was one of piety and religiousness as a norm. The national pledge and the faces of money were revised to include references to God, Congress held prayer sessions, and President Eisenhower was baptized in the White House (Miller 1954).

Among advanced countries, America continues to be one of the most religious, with most Americans self-identifying as Christian (Putnam 2010). Researchers have long noted that Christianity in the United States is more diverse than most other Christian nations, with adherents from a wide range of Christian denominations due to America’s character as a nation of immigrants and because support for religious organizations has never been compulsory (Finke & Stark 2005; Roof & McKinney 1992). However, the religious landscape, once unified by Christianity is now increasingly diverse as Americans begin to include non-Christian elements in their faith (Casanova 2007). More than ever, modern Westerners are choosing their own unique faith paths in a religious marketplace which offers a wide variety of options, a trend sometimes labeled, ‘new voluntarism’ (Kosmin & Keysar 2006; Possamai 2002; Roof & McKinney 1992, p. 9). Religious fracturing is facilitated both by increasing religious pluralism within American society, and by increasing religious individualism, which encourages people to develop their own belief outside from organized religion (Roof & McKinney 1992).

Scholars of religion, who used to categorize believers simply as “adherents” or “non-adherents,” find it difficult to categorize many modern faith practices. For example, Tweed (1999) found that of all the Americans subscribers to a popular Buddhist magazine, fully half

would not describe themselves as Buddhist (p. 74). He calls these non-Buddhists who subscribe to a Buddhist magazine ‘Buddhist sympathizers’. These are not lukewarm Buddhists; most describe themselves as belonging to a Christian denomination even as they practice the tenets of Buddhism and read Buddha’s teachings as part of their faith practice. Similarly, in 1991 Ankerberg and Weldon found that just one form of Hindu Transcendental Meditation had been taught to over three million Americans, with tens of millions more Americans practicing yoga, meditation, or other Hindu practices. Although the number of adherents to non-Christian religions in the United States is growing, the percentage remains too small to account for the society-wide trend of incorporating non-Christian religious practices into their lives (Smith 2002). The growth of non-Christian religious practices in the United States simply cannot be explained through immigration or conversion; instead the once-bright line between non-Christian and Christian practices is becoming blurred. Therefore, long-used measures of simple religious adherence have become problematic for researchers.

Not only are Americans increasingly accepting non-Christian beliefs and practices, but many people now claim “none” when asked about their religious preferences. The religious Nones should not be conflated with atheists or agnostics; researchers find that the None group is diverse and can include people with spiritual beliefs. For example, Kosmin and Keysar (2009) find that 51% of religious Nones believe either in a higher power or in a personal God. Further, the rise of religious Nones in America has not been accompanied by a rise in disbelief (Hout & Fischer 2012). Instead, many Americans are refusing to self-identify as religious even as they continue to espouse traditional beliefs and pray often. Therefore, discussions among scholars which divide Americans into ‘religious’ and ‘None’ can be problematic, as these categories fail to capture even the basic dimensions of modern American faith. A more nuanced approach to

religious Nones recognizes that this larger category is made up of a wide variety of people with different stances toward religion. For example, Baker and Smith (2009) divide all religious Nones into three categories: atheists, who could be characterized as anti-religious; unchurched believers, who tend to identify as spiritual; and agnostics, whose faith characteristics straddle the first two.

Not only do religious adherents and religious Nones defy once-easy categorization, but even atheism and agnosticism have become more complicated labels (Kosmin & Keysar 2006). Atheism is usually defined as “an absence of belief in the existence of God or gods,” (Bullivant 2013, p. 13). Agnosticism is a sub-category of atheism, usually thought of as a philosophical position which claims that neither positive belief in God or gods, nor certainty that God does not exist is rational; the agnostic claims that questions about God’s existence are inherently unknowable (Bullivant 2013). Usually atheists and agnostics are assumed by social science researchers to eschew religion, but this assumption is unwarranted. About 20 percent of all atheists and 60 percent of all agnostics self-identify as religious, and many attend religious services (Baker & Smith 2009). Further, 13 percent of atheists and 26 percent of agnostics consider themselves spiritual, and some pray or meditate. How should a modern American, who claims to not believe in God, but prays and self-identifies as religious and/or spiritual, be categorized by a scholar of religion?

Although religion in the United States was once unified enough to warrant the use of religious adherence variables, modern researchers struggle to find ways to categorize and understand the new American faith landscape. People who claim adherence to one religious tradition or another often borrow beliefs and rituals from other faith traditions, many Americans belonging to a wide variety of beliefs now call themselves religious Nones, and even many

atheists and agnostics call themselves “religious.” Clearly, the modern religious landscape is less unified and more confusing than it was when social scientists first began studying faith.

Researchers must begin incorporating new variables into research aiming to understand the American faith experience.

Cause of Fracturing: Individualism or Politics?

Researchers have posited a variety of reasons why American religion is fracturing, and two of the most commonly suggested and well-documented are rising individualism, and a response to politics. Americans may reject organized religion, not because of any feature of religion, but because they are increasingly individualistic, rejecting all social clubs and organizations, preferring solitary activity instead. Another factor which may be causing American rejection of religion is the increased mixing of religion and politics, which some scholars argue causes people to reject religious organizations which are perceived to be linked with unpopular politics.

Individualism causes religious fracturing. Some scholars argue that this religious change is rooted in 1960s trends of individualism and rejection of long-established institutions (Roof, Greer, Johnson, & Liebman 1993; Roof & McKinney 1992). The rise of individualism in American life is well-documented (Bellah et al. 1985; Grabb, Baer, & Curtis 1999; Putnam 2000; Spence 1985). Many theorists argue that self-identification with ‘spirituality’ rather than ‘religion’ may signal a decrease in religious organizational involvement due to individualism, even while signaling continued belief (Cohen & Hill 2007; Houtman & Mascini 2002; Spence 1985).

Socio-religious change in the 1960s was dramatic; for example, in just four years during the decade, public acceptance of premarital sex doubled from 24 percent to 47 percent (Putnam

2010). The hegemony of Judeo-Christian culture was questioned on college campuses, with many young students converting to Buddhism, Eastern Spiritualism, or refusing the label “Christian” in favor of “Jesus people” (Roof & McKinney 1992). Even the staid Catholic Church espoused newer, updated theologies, more fit for modern life, with its Second Vatican Council from 1962-1965. It was during the 1960s and 70s that young people dropped out of religious life in unprecedented proportions, turning instead to New Religious Movements, personal spiritual quests, or nothing at all.

This rejection of organized religion by young people in the 1960s and 70s is sometimes hypothesized to be a result of factors related to religion itself, but other scholars highlight the ways that young Americans began rejecting a wide range of societal organizations during this same time period (Cohen & Hill 2007; Spence 1985). As individualism increased, Americans were less likely to be involved in team sports, belong to civic organizations, and get to know their neighbors (Bellah et al. 1985). In ever increasing numbers, Americans eschew local social organizations and prefer solitary activities over group activities. Membership in most civic organizations, such as Rotary clubs and Masonic Lodges, has declined over several decades. Americans continue to be drawn more toward solitary sports like skiing than toward group sports like baseball. Even fashion and consumer trends became individualized; the economy shifted from a “Ford economy” in which customers may choose only from an extremely limited variety of Model-T cars, to a “Starbucks economy” in which products may be customized in an almost infinite variety of ways for each individual (Penn & Zalesne 2007).

As Americans embraced individual activities and individualized consumer goods, perhaps they turned toward individualized religious experience and away from organized, group religion. The movement of Americans away from organized religion may be a reflection of their

increasing distaste for social organizations as much or more than it is reflective of any feeling about religion. Warner's (1993) landmark article was the first major work to urge scholars to recognize how the religious market shapes religious choice, and in response, a flurry of academic literature confirmed that Americans' religious self-identification is becoming less well-defined (Dein 2005; Fuller 2001; Hout & Fischer 2012).

As researchers documented this new, shifting religious landscape, some argued that organized religion is declining, losing the power to influence citizens' lives as it loses moral hegemony and leaving believers to forge their own spiritual paths (Marler & Roozen 1993). Some Americans certainly seem to be creating their own individualized religions, epitomized in an interview recorded in the book *Habits of the Heart* with a woman named Sheila who claimed to follow her own private religion which she dubbed "Sheilaism" (Bellah et al. 1985, p. 221). Other researchers disagree, arguing instead that religion is stronger than ever because competition among religious organizations makes them more responsive to the desires of believers (Finke & Stark 1998; Iannaccone 1991; Chaves & Cann 1992). According to this second hypothesis, religious organizations in the United States have shifted from teaching generic, inoffensive messages, to appealing to believers' desires for spiritual experiences that feel raw, uncensored, and challenging (Iannaccone 1994). This shift has hollowed out moderate churches, which were once the core of the American faith experience, but dramatically increased the number of churches offering unique or unusual teachings. However this debate is finally resolved, the fact seems firmly established that American believers and non-believers have more choices than ever before, both of individual faith experiences away from organized religion, and choices of unique religious organizations.

Politics caused religious fracturing. Many researchers examining the rise of spirituality as an important co-occurring concept with religion have hypothesized that this rise is due to political orientation, the political fight for LGBT rights, and the merging of religion and politics. The general movement of Americans away from traditional religion is strongly associated with political liberalism, in fact so much so that some researchers believe the trend is driven by political concerns (Hout & Fischer 2012; Kinnaman & Lyons 2007).

The Religious Right as a political movement began in the United States in the 1970s as a reaction to feminism and gay rights movements (di Mauro & Joffe 2007). Religion began to feature prominently in political speeches, and religion often served as the rationale for political decision-making (Hout & Fischer 2012). Not only was political rhetoric affected, but both the Bush Sr. and Reagan presidencies encouraged the directing of public funds toward religious organizations such as abstinence-only religious education programs and religious crisis pregnancy centers (di Mauro & Joffe 2007). The Religious Right as a movement championed causes such as abstinence-only education, anti-homosexuality, and pro-life policies, positions which were often unpopular and perceived as overly intrusive and in some cases, discriminatory (di Mauro & Joffe 2007; Haffner & Wagoner 1999). Although this political turn toward religion was undoubtedly intended to help make America more righteous, it may have had the unintended effect of driving weakly religious Americans away from religion altogether.

This hypothesis that Americans reject religion because of the marriage of religion and politics is supported by research on religious Nones. The percentage of Americans claiming “no” religious affiliation rose dramatically in the 1980s and 1990s, but without any parallel drop in belief (Hout and Fischer 2002). In fact, most American religious Nones believe in God and in life after death. Instead, research supports the notion that religious Nones are most likely

responding to the rise of the Religious Right in the 1990s, which “pushed some [politically] moderate and liberal Americans with weak religious attachments away from religion,” (Hout and Fischer 2002, p. 179). Between 1974 and 2000, the increase in religious Nones among political liberals was 11 percent, among political moderates 5 percent, but among political conservatives, only 1.7 percent. Importantly, the percentage of liberals in the United States did not increase along with the number of Nones during this period. Baker and Smith (2009) agree, finding that the only characteristic common to all Americans who reject religion is their strong opposition to the marriage of religion and politics.

A body of research exists which does not explicitly mention the Religious Right, but examines the rejection of organized religion by people who perceive churches as anti-feminist and anti-homosexual, both originally Religious Right causes (di Mauro & Joffe 2007). As Americans began rejecting religion in the 1960s, they simultaneously embraced feminist viewpoints and become more accepting of people whose sexual orientations were outside of previously existing social norms (diMauro & Joffe 2007; Hout and Greeley 1987. Kinnaman and Lyons (2007)¹ argue that one of the biggest drivers of the rejection of religion today is the perception that organization religion is sexist and homophobic. Historically, Christian churches in the Western world have denied women political, social, and reproductive freedom (Walker 1998). Although religious fundamentalism continues to be associated with sex discrimination, many modern churches actively work to promote women’s rights globally and struggle to defy public perception of Christianity as sexist (Howland 1997; Walker 1998). However, many women reject organized religion because of its perceived anti-feminist rhetoric and agenda,

¹ Although Kinnaman and Lyons (2007) are not academics, their assertions are based on unique research created and funded by the Barna Group, based on a representative sample of young adults aged sixteen to twenty-nine, as well as interviews with American Christian church leaders and pastors.

preferring instead to be involved in women's spirituality groups (Faver 2000; Winter, Lummis, & Stokes 1994). A perception of sexism within organized religion may drive those who reject sex discrimination to embrace spirituality rather than religion. Similarly, many in the LGBT community embrace spirituality because it is perceived as not being associated with religious organizations which are thought of as judgmental (Halkitis et al. 2009).

The American rejection of religion may be rooted in the same individualism which causes Americans to reject civic organizations and team sports and embrace the individualization of consumer goods. It may also stem from a perception that organized religion is too cozy with politics, the Religious Right, and that it is sexist and homophobic. It is likely that Americans' increasing rejection of organized religion is rooted in both individualism, and distaste for the mixing of religion and politics. This modern turn in the faith experience of Americans away from organized religion toward an individual faith path means that researchers must stop relying on religious adherence as the most meaningful variable used to understand faith, and instead incorporate other variables into their study.

Why Use Religiousness *and* Spirituality?

Since the 1990s, Americans have increasingly rejected older, more traditional religious labels in favor of new ways of self-identifying (Kosmin, Keysar, Cragun, & Navarro-Rivera 2009). One of the most popular new ways for Americans to describe their faith is the term 'spiritual'. The term 'spiritual' was once used to describe only a specific subset of religious people, but more Americans self-identify as spiritual than as religious. (Pargament 1999; Marler & Hadaway 2002). Research examining faith in the United States can be greatly enhanced using spirituality as an additional variable because spirituality is a rich concept, closely related to religion but not identical. As described above (see the section titled "Definition of Important

Terms”), scholars disagree about whether religiousness and spirituality are completely distinct or overlapping concepts, but scholars uniformly agree that more Americans self-identify as “spiritual” than as “religious” (Marler & Hadaway 2002).

In 2012, Pew Forum found that 65 percent of Americans think of themselves as ‘religious’, 18 percent as ‘spiritual but not religious’, and 15 percent as ‘neither spiritual nor religious’. This pattern of Americans identifying more closely with spirituality than with religiousness has existed for at least two decades, and appears consistently throughout different operationalizations of the concepts of religiousness and spirituality. For example, in a 1995 survey, Zinnbauer et al. (1997) found that 74 percent of their sample described themselves as ‘spiritual and religious’, 19 percent as ‘spiritual but not religious’, 4 percent as ‘religious but not spiritual’, and 3 percent as ‘neither spiritual nor religious’. Pew Forum (2012) finds that 19 percent of Americans are unaffiliated with religion, and 37 percent of the unaffiliated use the label ‘spiritual but not religious’. Although the percentage of Americans who think of themselves as religious has declined over the last two decades, the percentage of Americans who think of themselves as spiritual remains steady.

Therefore, in the modern United States, the term ‘spiritual’ captures a broader range of believers than the term ‘religious’. Decades ago, researchers could focus on religious Americans only, and be assured of capturing the essence of the faith experience, but religious fracturing due to individualism and the marriage of religion and politics has changed the way academics should approach their study. Researchers studying faith must now include variables in addition to religiousness in order to understand the faith experience.

In addition, as described previously in this research, Americans who self-identify as “spiritual” may be qualitatively different than those who self-identify as “religious.” Many

Americans define one or the other term pejoratively, indicating a possible social split between the two groups (Zinnbauer et al. 1997). Psychological studies may have found personality distinctions between the two groups (Saucier & Skrzypinska 2006). In fact, the word “spiritual” may be most closely associated with New Age practices rather than beliefs which are traditional to the United States (Fuller 2001). Although spirituality is by no means the only variable which could add richness to the concept of religiousness, spirituality is a strong candidate for inclusion in future academic research examining faith.

Theoretical Framework: Moral Foundations Theory

This section of the literature review focuses on moral foundations theory. First, moral research before moral foundations theory is described, because this background helps clarify why moral foundations theory is now one of the most widely-used theories which explains morality. Next, I introduce moral foundations theory, followed by a description of each of the five moral foundations.

Moral Research before Moral Foundations Theory

Since the Enlightenment era, philosophers and academic thinkers have attempted to understand what human morality is and what it should be. The most well-recognized names in the academic study of morality are philosophers, such as Kant, Mill, and Rawls, who developed their own formulas for ‘ideal morality’. While moral philosophers contributed to our understanding of morality, their work is often difficult for social scientists to use for several reasons. First, moral philosophers tend to be prescriptivist rather than descriptivist. These philosophers prescribe an ideal moral code which they believe the entire world *should* follow. In contrast, social scientists describe the social world and its moral codes as they are, rather than as

they should be. A second, related problem for social scientists is that philosophical treatises on morality rarely draw on social science data to understand how morality evolved in humans, how it developed in individuals, or how it manifests in everyday life. Third, philosophical approaches to morality rarely bother to address the everyday moral dilemmas people face, focusing instead on important, but rare life-changing moral dilemmas, such as the famous “Trolley Problem”². Fourth, their moral codes generally reflect the moral conceptualizations of Western, academic, white men. These mostly-Western, mostly-white, mostly-male philosophers have historically argued that moral decision-making should be rooted in reason, not emotion. However, more modern research finds that moral decision-making is best understood as intuitive and emotional, though moral emotions are often tightly integrated with reason (Ignatow 2010). Finally, they focused almost exclusively on the moral implications of harm, care, and fairness, values now known to be emphasized by liberals more than by conservatives.

These flaws with moral philosophy were recognized and remedies were attempted by moral psychologists, who first began to study morality in a descriptive, rather than prescriptive, way. For decades, the field of moral psychology was dominated by the theories posited by Lawrence Kohlberg and Carol Gilligan (Haidt & Graham 2007). The founder of moral psychology, Kohlberg, hypothesized that as children develop, they pass through stages of moral reasoning which finally lead them to be able to instantiate justice (Kohlberg 1969). Kohlberg’s universal moral theoretical framework emphasizes justice or fairness as the primary moral concern of all cultures. Gilligan (1982) disagreed with Kohlberg’s theories, arguing that while men’s moral frameworks tend to emphasize fairness, women’s tend to emphasize care for others.

² The “Trolley Problem” is an ethical thought experiment popular among philosophers which asks whether it would be ethical to direct a runaway trolley car down a side track, resulting in one person’s death, or more ethical to allow the trolley to continue on its normal path, resulting in five people’s death.

She believes that because women are more often expected to be caretakers, they are more likely to create moral codes founded upon empathy, nurturing, and protection of the vulnerable.

Although moral psychologists continued to argue about the relative importance of fairness and empathy, the field united behind the idea that most moral decision-making is based on these twin principles. However, both of these principles have been interpreted individualistically, emphasizing the rights of individuals to be treated fairly and to be subject to no harm.

A recent turn in psychology research argues that most psychology researchers, morality researchers included, are W.E.I.R.D. – Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan 2010). Because most researchers belong to a subgroup of the world's population, and that subgroup is not particularly representative of the whole, much research is unintentionally biased, based on researchers' preconceptions of what questions are worthy of interest. WEIRD Westerners, and academics in particular, tend to be much more attuned to individual rights than to the "ethic of community." For decades, this has led the moral psychologists to ignore the moral orientations prominent in other cultural worldviews and among non-academic Westerners. Although the idea seems alien to Western academics, many people globally do not view individuals as inherently worthy of rights, but rather emphasize how behavior may benefit or harm society as a whole (Shweder & Bourne 1982). In many non-Western parts of the world, customs such as menstrual purity rules, dietary taboos, arranged marriage, and even child naming traditions are viewed as moral issues (Shweder, Mahapatra, & Miller 1987). With his exclusive focus on justice, Kohlberg dismissed these moral concerns as underdeveloped and indicating a lack of moral maturity. Gilligan had a broader scope of inquiry than Kohlberg, including both justice and care, but work based on her theories continued to ignore or dismiss the moral concerns of non-Westerners. However, in recent decades, moral

psychologists have begun rejecting such prescriptivist approaches to morality. Rather than assuming that Western individualistic morality is superior, more researchers are accepting that many people globally have moral intuitions which are not shared by most academics studying morality (Haidt & Graham 2007). Moral foundations theory was born from this new, descriptivist turn in moral research.

Introduction to Moral Foundations Theory

Moral foundations theory is an attempt to correct the biases inherent in the field of moral psychology by recognizing more collectivist moral intuitions. Moral foundations theory begins with the observation that anthropologists report similar foundational moral principles among all groups of people, no matter how different their cultures (Graham et al. 2012). Although the outcomes of moral reasoning may diverge widely, researchers Haidt and Joseph (2004) have identified globally-occurring ‘building blocks’ of human morality. Haidt and Joseph compare human moral intuition with other senses; using only five kinds of receptors on the tongue (salt, sweet, bitter, sour, and umami) humans experience a vast array of tastes. By creating a survey of moral research, and later testing their hypotheses with original research, Haidt and Joseph attempted to find the fundamental “tastes” underlying human morality.

Moral foundations theory proposes that children absorb morality through social learning, but also that human brain is “organized in advance of experience” to learn some norms and values more easily than others (Graham et al. 2012). The theory assumes that moral decision-making starts with universal intuitions, evolved in bodies as reflexive emotional responses to moral violations. Globally, humans respond to violations of community norms and rules with contempt, violations of individual rights with anger, and violations of sacredness and purity with disgust (Rozin, Lowery, Imada, & Haidt 1999). Although the universality of human response to

moral violations suggests that moral cognition is partly inborn, research also suggests that moral intuitions are shaped by culture (Haidt, Rozin, McCauley, & Imada 1997; Ignatow 2009). For example, violations of cultural norms may elicit a universal response, but norms vary from one culture to the next. Societies in which work is usually performed communally emphasize the moral value of each person performing their duty as part of the group. Unsurprisingly, modern, more individualized societies place more value on individual rights and freedoms.

Moral foundations theory claims that moral reasoning is generally based on these five foundations: 1) harm/care, 2) fairness, 3) in-group loyalty, 4) respect for authority, and 5) sanctity/purity (Graham et al. 2012). Two caveats apply: One – most researchers using moral foundations theory do not claim that only these five concepts are ever involved in moral decision-making; in fact, prominent Moral Foundations theorists have proposed adding “liberty” and “honesty” as sixth and seventh moral foundations (Iyer 2010; Iyer et al. 2012). However, the first five moral foundations identified are the best supported by research, and so are used most often (Graham et al. 2012). This dissertation uses only the most well-recognized five moral foundations. Two – these moral foundations do not predict the outcome of moral decision-making, only the process. For example, one person may take a political stance against abortion because they believe abortion harms fetuses, a moral decision based on the harm/care foundation. Another person, also relying on the harm/care foundation, may support abortion rights because they believe lack of abortion access harms women. The harm/care moral foundation may justify opposite positions on the issue of abortion, just as all five moral foundations may justify opposing positions on a variety of issues. Just as only five types of taste buds can be combined to create a seemingly infinite variety of tastes, so the five moral foundations can be used to justify a seemingly infinite variety of behaviors as “moral.” The

moral foundations are not morally prescriptive; they are simply the fundamental building blocks which all cultures use to construct their moral schemas.

Despite the popular association between morality, religion, and spirituality, most of the research to date using moral foundations theory does not emphasize religion and spirituality. In his book explaining moral foundations theory, Haidt (2012) describes religion as an agent which binds societies into moral communities, allowing them to compete more successfully than societies without a shared religion (p. 273). He argues that the cognitive mechanisms which allow humans to have religious experiences may have originally evolved as side-effects of other evolutionary processes, but those mechanisms were selected for because they ensured group cohesion. However, Haidt's book never attempts to apply moral foundations theory to understanding faith, nor provides any data exploring how the five moral foundations interact with faith.

Researchers using moral foundations theory rarely use the theory to understand faith, but the theory has been used often to differentiate between the moral orientations of different political groups. Political liberals tend to use only the first two moral foundations, harm/care and fairness, in moral decision-making (Graham, Haidt, & Nosek 2009). In contrast, political conservatives tend to use all five moral foundations when making moral decisions. Liberals tend to emphasize harm/care and fairness more than conservatives, perhaps because their values rest solely within these two foundations, rather than moral decision-making being split among five values which often compete with one another (Haidt & Graham 2007). Conservatives tend to value the stability of social institutions as much as they value harm avoidance and fairness, and so perceive loyalty to already-existing groups and respect for already-existing authority as moral goods.

Since moral foundations theory was first developed, the differences between conservatives' and liberals' moral orientations have been verified by many researchers in a wide variety of contexts. When survey respondents are asked how much money they would have to receive to violate moral norms, liberals require less money than conservatives to violate in-group loyalty, authority, and purity norms (Graham, Haidt, & Nosek 2009). Analysis of sermon texts revealed that politically liberal pastors discuss harm/care and fairness more often than conservative pastors. In contrast, politically conservative pastors are much more likely to discuss all five moral foundations, including in-group loyalty, authority, and purity.

Moral foundations theory has been used by researchers studying a wide variety of topics besides political orientations. Moral decision-making in video game play can be predicted by Moral foundations theory across age groups ranging from teen to elderly, and Germany and the United States (Joeckel, Bowman, & Dogruel 2012; Weaver & Lewis 2012). Researchers have associated Moral Foundation outcomes with other characteristics measured in traditional psychology, such as attachment style, social dominance and hierarchy, agreeableness, nastiness, domestic abuse patterns, and psychopathy (Berkel, Crandall, Eidelman, & Blanchard 2015; Glenn, Iyer, Graham, Koleva, & Haidt 2009; Hirsh, DeYoung, Xu, & Peterson 2010; Koleva, Selterman, Iyer, Ditto, & Graham 2013; Stankov & Lee 2016; Vecina 2014). A person's likelihood of donating to charities, to tell others about their donation, and to lie about donating have been linked by researchers with moral foundations theory (Nilsson, Erlandsson, & Vastfjall 2016; Winterich, Zhang, & Mittal 2012). Several researchers have examined the links between moral orientations and environmental attitudes and behaviors (Dawson & Tyson 2012; Dickinson, McLeod, Bloomfield, & Allred 2016; Kidwell, Farmer, & Hardesty 2013). Neuroscientists have linked moral foundations with the distribution of brain volume (Lewis,

Kanai, Bates, & Rees 2012). Moral foundations theory has even been linked with sports fandom (Winegard & Deaner 2010). It may seem to a casual observer as though there is no facet of human experience with which Moral Foundation Theory cannot be linked.

The Five Moral Foundations

What follows is a description of each moral foundation: harm/care, fairness, in-group loyalty, authority, and purity. Moral Foundations theorists rely heavily upon explanations from evolutionary psychology in explaining how each foundation arose, and how they continue to influence human moral decision-making.

Harm/care moral foundation. Moral Foundations theorists believe that the brains of mammals generally, and specifically apes, evolved to feel compassion for the suffering of their offspring, kin, and in some cases may even extend compassion to all other mammals (Batson, Ahmad, & Lishner 2009; Haidt & Graham 2007). Many animals automatically match the emotional state of another they can observe, and most normally-functioning animals with higher-order thinking display the ability to understand other animals' perspectives, including their pain (de Waal 2008; Smith 2006). Empathy for others' pain is the root of a moral desire to avoid causing that pain in others. Concern for others' wellbeing and avoidance of harm to others has long been hypothesized to be one of the fundamental bases of morality (Haidt & Graham 2007). Most cultures value compassion and care, and either condemn or set their own unique, culture-dependent moral limits on cruelty and violence.

Fairness moral foundation. Most animals who live in groups must develop methods for hunting or gathering together, distributing resources evenly within their group, and living in close proximity. Young social animals learn to play 'fairly', such as self-handicapping, with their siblings or risk being excluded from play (Bekoff 2001). Social animals, like humans, evolved

cooperation, helping behavior, and mutual punishment behavior because such behaviors increased the likelihood of survival (Baumard, Andre, & Sperber 2013; Dugatkin & Bekoff 2003). Although the desire for fairness undoubtedly evolved among humans, modern norms and institutions play a large role in regulating resources and punishing unfairness, especially within societies so large that most interactions are between non-related people (Henrich et al. 2010). Humans respond to others perceived as behaving “fairly” with trust, friendship, and gratitude; to those perceived as ‘unfair’ with suspicion and aggression; and to their own unfair actions with guilt (Trivers 1971). Although some societies teach that fairness only exists when all members are equal, most do not equate equality and fairness (Boehm 1999). For example, if some members of society are perceived as more ‘deserving’ than others, perfectly equal distribution of resources would be perceived as ‘unfair’ to the more deserving members. Therefore, perceptions of fairness, like all other moral foundations, is highly dependent upon each society’s fairness norms.

In-group loyalty moral foundation. Humans, as well as their ape evolutionary ancestors, evolved to live in close-knit social groups made up at least partially of kin (Dunbar 1993). Because of this history, humans are notoriously tribally-conscious. Even when groups are created arbitrarily, people belonging to those groups quickly develop group loyalty, support others in their group, and begin hurling invectives at competing groups (Fletcher & Zwick 2004; Purser 2009; Sherif et al. 1988). Humans value their in-group, and so they extend those feelings to praise those who support the group’s goals and defend the in-group against attack, as well as to judge as immoral those who thwart the group’s goals or betray the group (Haidt & Graham 2007). In modern cultures, people who value in-group loyalty tend to emphasize patriotism as well as rituals and holidays associated with nationalism.

Respect for authority moral foundation. Human social groups are virtually always hierarchical with leaders expected to make wise decisions and defend the group. While many other primate leaders rule by the fear created through aggression, humans tend to value leaders who are perceived as fair and wise, encouraging group members to voluntarily submit (Haidt and Graham 2007; Tyler & Lind 1992). Leaders are perceived as ‘legitimate’ if their ascension to power followed cultural expectations for leadership, and if they lead without being exploitative, bullying, inept, or disloyal to group goals (Einarsen, Aasland, & Skogstad 2007). Followers are expected to display obedience, respect, and loyalty to the leader as well as the group. Symbols and rituals associated with authority, as well as the amount of deference group members are expected to display to authority, are highly culturally dependent.

Purity moral foundation. Cleanliness and purity are often seen by Westerners, and specifically academics not as moral issues, but as medical issues. Humans evolved a disgust reflex because it is protective against diseases associated with rotting food, corpses, and bodily excretions (Oaten, Stevenson, & Case 2009; Rozin, Haidt, & Fincher 2009). However, this disgust reflex has been used by human societies as a social emotion associated with people with deformities, people who do disgusting occupations, to enforce caste hierarchies, and also to enforce moral norms (Haidt & Graham 2007; Tybur, Lieberman, & Griskevicius 2009). In general, behavior which is perceived as ‘carnal’, such as violations of food or sex taboos, is labeled morally impure, while morally pure individuals are those who do not indulge in ‘animal’ impulses (Rozin, Haidt, & McCauley 2000; Rozin, Haidt, & Fincher 2009; Wright, Wallace, Bailey, & Hyde 2013).

Factors that Shape Religiousness, Spirituality, and Moral Orientation

This study uses linear regression to explore the relationships between religiousness, spirituality, and morality. Previous literature discussing religiousness, spirituality, and morality indicates that multiple demographic factors may shape religiousness, spirituality, and morality: gender, race, age, education, income, work status, marital status, and region of the country. This section provides a short review of the literature associated with each factor.

Gender

The field of moral research has a long history of trying to determine differences between the moral orientations of men and women. Freud declared women's morality weaker and inferior to men's, a notion that continued through the 1970s as moral researchers claimed that women were less rational about morality than men (Tagney & Dearing 2002). Gilligan's (1982) groundbreaking work attempted to correct this bias by declaring that women's morality was not inferior, merely different. She, and researchers following her theory, argued that men are more oriented toward justice while women are more oriented toward caring (Brabeck 1983; Stiller & Forrest 1990). However, two meta-analyses testing Gilligan's claim found little evidence for moral gender differences (Jaffee & Hyde 2000; Thoma 1986). Research using moral foundations theory generally focuses on political orientation, using gender only as a control variable, and generally finding no statistically significant variation between genders (Graham, Haidt, & Nosek 2009).

Gender is not perfectly predictive of religiousness, but it is strongly associated and so will be included as an important factor in this study. Research supports the notion that men are more likely to be atheists or religious Nones than women (Bryant 2007; Chatters et al. 2008; Kosmin et al. 2009). In fact, gender is one of the most important predictors of lack of

religiousness not only in the United States, but across a variety of Western nations (Hayes 2000). However, there is little research to suggest whether men may reject spirituality at higher or lower rates than women.

Race

Although this study assumes morality may vary across race and controls for it, previous literature suggests that moral orientations should be fairly stable across race. Moral foundations theory was developed by testing moral decision-making globally to find moral schemas common to all people across racial and cultural divides (Haidt & Graham 2007).

Morality is not expected to vary across races, but race is an important factor in this study because of its effect on religiousness and spirituality. Academic studies of religion have long noted that racial minorities are more likely to be traditionally religious than whites, and conversely, that whites are more likely to be religiously unaffiliated (Chatters, Taylor, & Lincoln 1999; Pew Forum 2012; Wong & Vinsky 2009). For example, African Americans and Caribbean Blacks are both less likely than whites to self-identify as “spiritual only” or “neither spiritual nor religious” (Chatters et al. 2008). It should be noted, however, that recently Hispanics have begun to trend divergently from other minority groups in the United States. Although most minority groups are strongly religious and spiritual, the percentage of Hispanics identifying as religious Nones has increased in recent years (Kosmin et al. 2009).

Age

Morality has long been linked with age as moral researchers attempt to define how morality changes over life stages. For example, Kohlberg (1969) believed that people graduate through stages of increasingly complex moral decision-making as they age. Although Kohlberg’s

emphasis on justice as the only foundation of morality is being rejected by modern moral researchers, the idea that morality develops along with cognition is well-accepted (Eisenberg 2000; Gibbs 2014; Walker, de Vries, & Trevethan 1987).

Not only is age associated with morality, but also with religiousness. Researchers studying religion have long noted that younger people are less likely to belong to religious organizations than older people (Hayes 2000; Hout & Fischer 2002; Hout & Fischer 2012; Hunsberger 1985; Pew Forum 2012; Roof et al. 1993). In fact, researchers believe that the general decline in religious affiliation across the Western world is driven more by generational replacement than by changing attitudes in any single generation or than by the effects of major world events (Crockett & Voas 2006; Hayes 2000; Hout & Fischer 2002; Hout & Fischer 2012; Pew Forum 2012; Voas & Crocket 2005). Hout and Fischer (2012) find that while the number of people in each cohort who are religious Nones increases slightly over time, this effect is dwarfed by the differences between cohorts, which increases an average of four percentage points per cohort.

Education

Education is an important factor because education levels are strongly associated with religiousness. While most scholars agree that several decades ago, Americans who rejected religion were better educated than the average population, research examining the current relationship between religion/spirituality and education is not clear. Kosmin et al. (2009) finds negligible educational differences between religious Nones and the rest of the population, with very slightly larger difference among college graduates. Pew Forum (2012) finds a larger effect than Kosmin et al, reporting that atheists and agnostics have significantly more education than the general population, which helps religious Nones as a whole slightly more education than

average. Hayes (2000) finds a larger effect than other researchers, claiming that lack of religion is associated with higher education in the United States and five other Western nations. In sharp contrast, Massengill and MacGregor (2012) find that religious Nones now have *lower* educational attainment than the average population, a trend which they propose began in 1960. This confusing state of the research literature points to the need for more analysis of the relationship between religion, spirituality, and education, a research question which is beyond the scope of this paper. Whatever the true relationship between religion, spirituality, and education level, it is clear that education should be considered an important factor.

Income

Income is closely associated with religiousness, a relationship which makes it an important factor in this study. Religiosity has long been associated with low income, poverty, and general economic insecurity (Norris & Inglehart 2011). Religion functions as a psychological salve to soothe the existential uncertainty inherent in poverty (Immerzeel & Tubergen 2013). However, recent research disagrees, suggests that religious Nones do not differ from the general population in their average household income (Kosmin & Keysar 2009). As with education, the relationship between religion, spirituality, and income is currently unclear, but the associations found in previous literature justify the inclusion of income as a control variable.

Marital Status

Currently, no research literature associates marital status with moral orientations, but the relationship between marriage and religiousness is well-established; married people are more likely to self-identify as religious and spiritual than people who are not married (Bock & Radelet

1988; Chatter et al. 2008b; Hayes 2000; Hertel 1988; Pew Forum 2012; Sherkat & Ellison 1999). Divorce in a family is associated with divorcees becoming religious Nones, and their adult children self-identifying as “spiritual but not religious” (Lawton & Bures 2001; Zhai, Ellison, Stokes, and Glenn 2008). Further, it is possible that the current trend of young people rejecting religion is partially driven by their increased age at first marriage (Wuthnow 2010).

Region

Region of the country is not associated with morality in previous literature, but regional variations in both religiousness and spirituality justify its inclusion as a factor in this study. In the United States, Southerners consistently hold to ‘traditional’ religious patterns, including religious organizational participation, while Northerners have begun rejecting religion in favor of spirituality (Chatters et al. 2008; Gunnoe & Moore 2002; Pew Forum 2012). Additionally, Americans from the West and Northeast are more likely to be religious Nones than Americans from other regions (Pew Forum 2012).

Rurality

Although popular wisdom often claims that rural Americans have different moral values than city dwellers, no research to date supports this claim. However, rurality is an important factor this study because of the relationship between rurality, religiousness, and spirituality. Americans who live in urban areas are more likely to reject religion than Americans who live in rural areas (Barros & McCleary 2003; Ruiters & Van Tubergen 2009; Shahabi et al. 2002). Further, spirituality is replacing religion more in urban environments than in rural environments (Kisala 2004).

Political Orientation

Political orientation is strongly associated with moral orientations, and must be included as a factor in a study of morality, religiousness, and spirituality. As described above, political liberals tend to make moral decisions based on harm/care and fairness moral foundations (Graham, Haidt, & Nosek 2009; Haidt & Graham 2007). In contrast, political conservatives tend to use all five moral foundations: harm/care, fairness, in-group loyalty, respect for authority, and purity. Because Moral Foundation theorists do not tend to include variables associated with religiousness and spirituality in their study, it is not yet known whether political orientation variables will remain statistically significant with the inclusion of religiousness and spirituality in the research.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Restatement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to understand how religiousness and spirituality are associated with theorized moral orientations described by Moral foundations theory. Religiousness and spirituality are associated with morality in popular culture and philosophical treatises, but very little academic research explores the link between these concepts (Cragun et al. 2012; Luco 2014). Moral foundations theory is one of the most reliable, replicable, well-respected methods of understanding moral decision-making available to academic researchers, and yet this theory has not yet been used to understand links between religiousness, spirituality, and morality. This dissertation corrects that oversight.

Research Question and Hypotheses

The main research question answered in this study is whether religiousness and spirituality (or lack thereof) influence moral decision-making, and in what ways. This dissertation tests five hypotheses, corresponding with the five moral foundations described by moral foundations theory: harm/care, fairness, in-group loyalty, authority, and purity. No research to date has associated religiousness and spirituality with morality, but hypotheses can be extrapolated using previous research into morality.

Hypothesis 1: Greater spirituality will be associated with higher reliance on the harm/care variables, controlling for all other variables. There is no previous research directly linking harm/care concern with religiousness or spirituality. However, inasmuch as altruism, empathy, and prosocial behavior is assumed to be linked with concern for the harm/care foundation,

research predictions can be made. Altruism is associated with spirituality in general, and empathy is associated specifically with non-religious spirituality (Huber & MacDonald 2011). General religiousness is not directly associated with empathy, although certainly empathy is associated with some specific types of religiousness (Duriez 2004; Markstrom, Huey, Stiles, & Krause 2010). Among Christians, prosocial attitudes, such as concern with charity or social justice, are most associated with harm/care values (Johnson et al. 2016).

Hypothesis 2: Greater religiousness will be associated with higher reliance on the fairness variables, controlling for all else. Religious believers are drawn into ‘moral communities’ of shared beliefs, including an emphasis on being just and fair to others (Graham & Haidt 2010). Therefore, I expect religiousness to be associated with fairness. However, not all religious people can be expected to care about fairness equally; for example, Christians with prosocial attitudes are more likely than other Christians to be concerned with fairness (Johnson et al. 2016).

Hypothesis 3: Greater religiousness will be associated with higher reliance on the in-group loyalty variable, all else being kept equal. Religiousness has long been associated with collectivism, while lack of religion is associated with individualism (Allik & Realo 2004; Cukur, de Guzman, & Carlo 2004). In-group belonging and bonding are thought to be two of the four characteristics which define religion globally (Saraglou 2011). This relationship is so well-established, the percentage of a population disaffiliated with religion is one of eight often-used measures to assign a geographic region the label “collectivist” or “individualist” (Vandello & Cohen 1999). One of the few academic analyses of moral foundations theory which addresses religiousness hypothesizes that religion gives devotees a ‘moral community’ which they feel loyalty to, and then judge any breaches of loyalty as immoral behavior (Graham & Haidt 2010).

In addition, use of the loyalty foundation is predicted by religious commitment more than any aspect of belief (Johnson et al. 2016).

Hypothesis 4: Religiousness will be positively associated, and spirituality will be negatively associated, with the authority variable controlling for all other variables. Religious adherence, as opposed to spirituality, is strongly associated with a respect for traditions of authority. The historical movement away from Catholicism in Europe may be partially due to the rejection of authority and the church that authority was rooted in (Stout 1981). The association between religiousness and authority has continued to the present, so strong that Proctor (2006) proposes that trust in institutions such as religion and government could be the basis for academic study of religiosity.

Hypothesis 5: Greater religiousness will be associated with higher reliance on the purity variable, all else being equal. People who are ‘traditionally religious’ are more likely to condemn perceived moral pollution, such as homosexuality, than other groups (Rosik, Dinges, & Saavedra 2013). Not all religious people value purity equally; among Christians, those who are most committed, those who view God as an authoritarian figure, and those who are Bible literalists are most likely to value purity (Johnson et al. 2016). In addition, purity is hypothesized to be a ‘binding’ value, helping religious communities easily identify group members and creating rules and norms which members share in common (Graham & Haidt 2010).

Data

This dissertation uses the Measuring Morality survey created by Duke University’s Stephen Vaisey (principal investigator). This instrument surveyed a representative sample of 1,519 Americans in 2012, asking a broad range of questions related to morality, demographics, organizational affiliation, opinions, and personal habits.

The survey instrument was created by Duke University's research team, but it was conducted by Knowledge Networks, a for-profit survey company which provides a representative sample using research panels (Gesellschaft fur Konsumforschung 2013) From 1999 on, approximately 55,000 adult panelists were randomly selected to be part of the research panel using random digit dialing and address-based sampling techniques which cover 97 percent of all U.S. households. Once randomly selected by Knowledge Networks, adults who agree to become panelists complete surveys online, available in both Spanish and English. Adults without internet access are provided with a computer and a laptop, ensuring that online surveys include Americans from a broad range of socioeconomic backgrounds. Small groups of panelists are selected from the larger pool of all panelists to complete surveys using a probability proportional to size weighted sampling approach. Each Knowledge Networks panelist completes an average of two surveys a month.

The sample was weighted using Knowledge Networks' multi-stage weighting technique. First, as potential respondents are initially contacted and agree (or not) to become panelists, statistical weighting is used to correct for selection biases. Next, the panelists are weighted based on comparison between their demographic characteristics and Current Population Survey data. Finally, each study sample is weighted after collection based on survey design and non-response rates. Knowledge Networks' final weights were used in this dissertation.

Data Analysis

Measuring Religiousness and Spirituality

This dissertation uses self-identified religiousness and spirituality based on answers to Likert scale questions. The majority of respondents in any representative sample of Americans will identify as religious *and* spiritual, but a growing minority of Americans identify otherwise

(Dein 2005; Fuller 2001; Hout & Fischer 2002; Marler & Hadaway 2002; Roof 1993; Streib 2008).

The Measuring Morality survey asks respondents the following question: “Religiously I consider myself...” with possible answer choices: 1 (*Very religious*), 2 (*Religious*), 3 (*Somewhat religious*), 4 (*Religious in name only*), 5 (*Not religious*), or 6 (*Anti-religious*). The survey also asks the respondents: “Spiritually, I consider myself...” with possible answer choices: 1 (*Very spiritual*), 2 (*Spiritual*), 3 (*Somewhat spiritual*), 4 (*Not spiritual*), 5 (*Anti-spiritual*). The two questions offer respondents parallel Likert scales, with the exception that respondents may claim to be “religious in name only,” but cannot claim to be “spiritual in name only.” The phrase “religious in name only” has not been defined in academic literature, either by researchers themselves or in an attempt to understand what Americans may mean when they use this label. Although approximately seven percent of the Measuring Morality survey respondents claimed to be “religious in name only,” because of the extreme difficulty of understanding what this label means to respondents, all those choosing this label were excluded from analysis.

Measuring Morality

The Moral Foundations question index used has been used by previous researchers, but their work examined political orientations only (Graham, Haidt, & Nosek 2009). Respondents are asked how much money they would have to be paid in order to violate a variety of moral norms. The Measuring Morality survey asked respondents three questions associated with violation of each of five moral foundations for fifteen total Moral Foundations questions. However, three questions, each associated with different moral foundations, were excluded from this study because of low reliability measures. This process is described in more detail below (see the section titled “Measures of Reliability”).

Control Variables

A variety of control variables are used in the linear regression analysis, most of them demographic. Gender was reported as a simple dichotomous variable, and for this study, it was recoded as a dummy variable. Age was retained as it was originally reported, a linear variable. Race was originally reported as a five-category nominal variable with possible answers, White, Black, Hispanic, other, and mixed. All categories were dummy-coded and White was used as the reference because it was the largest category.

Income was reported ordinally, with nineteen discrete income category choices, and it was used as originally reported. Education level was also originally reported as an ordinal variable, with fourteen category choices. The education variable was also used as-is. Marital status was originally reported as a six-category nominal variable with possible answers, married, widowed, divorced, separated, never married, and living with partner. The categories widowed, divorced, separated, and never married were very small, and so they were collapsed into a new category labeled single. Therefore, the marital status variable used in this research contains three categories: married, living with partner, and single. Although married is the largest category,³ single is a large category as well, and seems more conceptually separate from the other two categories. Therefore, single is used as the reference variable.

The variable used for region of the country includes four categories: “Northeast,” “Midwest,” “South,” and “West.” The Measuring Morality dataset includes another regional variable with nine categories which could have been used. Previous research suggests that religiousness and spirituality may vary along broad regional divides, but no previous research predicts that fine-grained regional distinctions (Chatters et al. 2008; Gunnoe & Moore 2002; Pew

³ All category percentages are listed in the “Descriptive Statistics” section.

Forum 2012). Each of the four regional categories used was dummy-coded, with “South” as a reference variable because it is the largest category. Rurality is measured using a simple dichotomous variable which indicates the Metropolitan Statistical Area status of each participant’s home as “non-metro” or “metro.” The variable was dummy coded for use in the linear regression.

Political orientation was originally recorded as a seven-point Likert scale, a methodology which could allow researchers to treat political orientation as a linear variable. However, descriptive analysis revealed that a full 35.1% of all Americans identified with category four, labeled, “Moderate, middle-of-the-road,” indicating that respondents treated the label “moderate” as a discrete political category. Therefore, political orientations were divided into the same three categories that respondents seemed to naturally fall, with approximately one-third of the sample each in conservative, moderate, and liberal categories.

Data Analysis

First, descriptive statistics of independent and dependent variables are provided, including means and standard deviations. Next is a table of associations between dependent and independent variables. Finally, the data is analyzed using linear regression using the entire sample.⁴ Although the data used is already a representative sample of the population of the

⁴ Two methods of linear regression analysis were explored: the method described in this dissertation, and another method which divided the sample into subsamples. Because Ammerman (2013) showed that Americans who belong to different religious organizations are likely to define “religiousness” and “spirituality” differently, the second method of analysis divided the larger sample into these three categories: Protestants who identify as “born-again,” Protestants who do not identify as “born again,” and religious Nones. However, these subsamples proved too homogeneous to yield many statistically significant moral differences along the scales of religiousness and spirituality. No statistically significant differences were found among Protestants who call themselves “born again.” Among Protestants who do not call themselves born-again, both religious and spiritual people were less likely to value the harm foundation. Among religious Nones (people who do not self-identify with any religious organization), higher levels of self-identified religiousness are associated with higher reliance on the authority and purity moral foundations. Therefore, people who do not belong to any religious organization, and yet call themselves

United States, the data was weighted in order to increase representativeness, using the weights provided by Knowledge Networks. (See the section titled “Data” for more information about weighting.) The original data included 1,519 cases. 244 cases were deleted from the dataset because they did not provide responses to all dependent and independent variables, or self-identified as “religious in name only,” leaving dataset with $N = 1275$.

Measures of Reliability

Using Cronbach’s Alpha, I tested the reliability of the factor structure of each of the moral foundations: harm/care, fairness, in-group loyalty, authority, and purity. Using all three-item measures for each foundation, Cronbach’s alphas were .67 (Harm), .71 (Fairness), .66 (In-Group Loyalty), .64 (Authority), .42 (Purity). One item was deleted from the harm scale in order to increase Cronbach’s alpha to .72.⁵ The Cronbach’s alpha for the fairness scale only decreased with the deletion of items, so all three items were kept. One item was deleted from the in-group loyalty scale in order to increase Cronbach’s alpha to .72.⁶ The Cronbach’s alpha for the authority scale is .64, a little lower than desired, but the deletion of items does not increase the scale’s reliability and so all three questions were kept in the scale. The purity scale is the most problematic of the scales, with a Cronbach’s alpha of only .42. One item was deleted to increase the scale’s reliability to .51, which is still a less-than-desirable Cronbach’s alpha.⁷ However, comparison with other Moral Foundations Research reveals that these scales are often used even

“religious,” seem more likely to make more decisions based on respect for authority, and based on concern about purity.

⁵ The deleted item was: “Indicate how much money someone would have to pay you for you to be willing to make cruel remarks to an overweight person about his or her appearance.”

⁶ The deleted item was: “Indicate how much money someone would have to pay you for you to be willing to break of all communications with your immediate and extended family for one year.”

⁷ The deleted item was” Indicate how much money someone would have to pay you for you to be willing to get a blood transfusion of one pint of disease-free, compatible blood from a convicted child molester.”

with extremely low Cronbach's alpha scores. For example, Graham, Haidt, and Nosek (2009) published research with three-item measures for each foundation with the following Cronbach's alphas: .62 (Harm), .67 (Fairness), .59 (In-group Loyalty), .39 (Authority), and .70 (Purity). Because the scales used in this dissertation are more reliable than the scales used in previously published research, these scales were deemed acceptable despite low Cronbach's alphas.

Table 1

Final Cronbach's Alphas

Scale	Cronbach's alpha
Harm	.72
Fairness	.71
Loyalty	.72
Authority	.64
Purity	.51

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Restatement of Research Question

This dissertation examines the associations between religiousness, spirituality, and moral orientations. Using moral foundations theory, five moral principles are tested: harm/care, fairness, in-group loyalty, respect for authority, and purity.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 shows the results of descriptive statistics for all independent and dependent variables: religiousness, spirituality, as well as the harm, fairness, loyalty, authority, and purity scales. Note that this table includes the *N* for each variable, in order to show which variables contribute most to the decreased total *N*. The total *N* used for analysis was 1292.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for All Independent and Dependent Variables

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Religiousness	1307	1	5	3.22	1.01
Spirituality	1404	1	5	3.43	.98
Harm Scale	1404	1	8	7.69	.95
Fairness Scale	1404	1	8	7.19	1.28
Loyalty Scale	1404	1	8	7.03	1.58
Authority Scale	1404	1	8	6.51	1.70
Purity Scale	1404	1	8	7.25	1.28

The religiousness and spirituality scales have a minimum score of one and a maximum score of five. The mean religiousness score is 3.22, higher than the expected average of 3 if Americans were equally likely to self-identify as highly religious as they are to self-identify as low in religiousness. The sample mean of 3.22 supports the idea that on average, Americans highly value religiousness. The sample mean for spirituality scores is even higher. At 3.43, the mean indicates that Americans value spirituality, and on average, self-identify as spiritual more than they self-identify as religious.

The harm, fairness, loyalty, authority, and purity scales have a minimum score of one and a maximum score of eight. The expected average, if Americans were equally likely to choose any of the eight possible scores, is 4.5. However, all sample means are far above this theoretical average, indicating that Americans tend to highly value all five moral foundations in moral decision-making. At 6.51, the authority scale's mean is lowest, indicating that on average, Americans value respect for authority less than they value the other four moral foundations. At 7.69, the harm scale's mean is highest, and very close to the maximum possible mean of eight. This very high average indicates that Americans value harm-avoidance more than they value the other four moral foundations.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for all Control Variables (Standard Deviation in Parentheses)

Male	49.3% (.500)
Age	46.6 (17.1)
Race	
White	67.6% (.468)
Black	10.9% (.311)
Hispanic	14.3% (.350)
Other	5.9% (.236)
Mixed	1.4% (.116)
Income	11.8 (4.41)
Education	10.1 (1.95)
Marital Status	
Single	36.1% (.481)
Married	54.9% (.498)
Partnered	8.9% (.286)
Region	
South	36.0% (.480)
Northeast	18.9% (.391)
Midwest	21.9% (.414)
West	23.2% (.422)
Rural	16.2% (.369)
Political Orientation	
Conservative	35.8% (.480)
Moderate	35.1% (.478)
Liberal	29.2% (.455)
N	1492

The demographics of the sample are indicated by Table 3. Gender of respondents is a dichotomous variable, with males making up 49.3 percent of the sample. Age is measured linearly, with the average age of participants being 46.6. Participants self-identify their race based on five nominal categories, with 67.6 percent of the sample identifying as white, 10.9 percent as Black, 14.3 percent as Hispanic, 5.9 percent as “other” race, and 1.4 percent as mixed race.

Household income is recorded ordinally, using nineteen categories. The sample's average income is 11.8, indicating an average income between the eleventh and twelfth income categories. The eleventh income category is "\$40,000 to \$49,999," and the twelfth is "\$50,000 to \$59,000." Education level is also ordinal, recorded using fourteen categories. The sample's average education level is 10.1, indicating an average education just a little above the tenth education category. The tenth education category is "some college, no degree," and the eleventh is "associate degree."

This research divided respondents into three nominal marital status categories. 36.1 percent self-identified as single, 54.9 percent as married, and 8.9 percent as partnered. Nominal regional variables reveal that 36.0 percent of the sample is from the South, 18.9 percent from the Northeast, 21.9 percent from the Midwest, and 23.2 percent from the West. Only 16.2 percent of the sample is from a rural area.

Political orientation is divided into three nominal categories. Conservatives are the largest category of political orientation, making up 35.8 percent of the sample. Almost as many Americans are moderate, with 35.1 percent of this representative sample self-identifying as such. 29.2 percent of the sample is liberal.

Associations between Variables: Crosstabulations

In this section, I describe the associations between independent and dependent variables. Table 4 shows the percentage of respondents in each category of religiousness crosstabulated with spirituality. Tables 5 through 14 provide tables showing the percentage of respondents within each category of religiousness or spirituality, crosstabulated with the harm, fairness, in-group loyalty, authority, and purity morality scales.

Table 4

Percentage of Respondents within each Category of Religiousness and Spirituality

	Anti-spiritual	Not Spiritual	Somewhat Spiritual	Spiritual	Very Spiritual	Total
Anti-religious	0.8%	1.2%	0.7%	0.2%	0.2%	3.0%
Not Religious	0.2%	12.6%	5.7%	3.7%	0.7%	22.9%
Somewhat Religious	--	3.0%	21.5%	7.2%	2.0%	33.6%
Religious	--	0.2%	3.5%	22.5%	3.7%	29.8%
Very Religious	--	0.2%	0.2%	1.1%	9.3%	10.7%
Total	1.0%	17.2%	31.5%	34.6%	15.7%	100.0%

Table 4 shows the percentage of all participants who belong to each category of spirituality and religiousness. Very few people describe themselves as “anti-” spirituality or religiousness, results that agree with other research which finds that Americans generally do not reject faith. The largest category is of those who self-identify as “spiritual” and “religious,” followed closely by those who identify as “somewhat spiritual” and “somewhat religious.” One may have expected that more than only 9.3 percent of Americans self-identify with the highest levels of spirituality and religiousness, given the prominent role faith has in American civic and political life. However, the percentage of Americans who self-identify as “very spiritual” and “very religious” is smaller than those who identify as “not spiritual” and “not religious,” at 12.6 percent.

The correlations in this table again confirm that Americans seem to be more comfortable identifying with spirituality than with religiousness. For example, 15.7 percent of Americans call themselves “very spiritual,” but only 10.7 percent identify as “very religious.” Similarly, 34.6

percent call themselves “spiritual” but only 29.8 percent identify as “religious.” Conversely, more Americans reject religiousness than reject spirituality. Only 1.0 percent identify as “anti-spiritual,” but three times as many identify as “anti-religious.” Similarly, only 17.2 percent identify as “not spiritual,” but a larger percentage, 22.9 percent, identify as “not religious.”

However, these correlations also point to the ways that religiousness and spirituality are perceived as somewhat linked. A full 66.7 percent of respondents self-identified with identical modifier for spirituality and religiousness.⁸ Although a respondent may choose to identify as “somewhat spiritual” and “somewhat religious” even while considering “spirituality” and “religiousness” to be vastly different concepts, the fact that most respondents chose the same modifier for both probably indicates some popular association between the two. Test for multicollinearity between religiousness and spirituality were completed, to discover whether the concepts vary independently. Variance Inflation Factor between religiousness and spirituality is 2.004, indicating no multicollinearity problems between the two variables. The tolerance value is 0.499, confirming that multicollinearity is not a problem for this study. Although “religiousness” and “spirituality” are clearly somewhat associated, they vary independently.

⁸ The percentage of respondents who chose identical modifiers for both variables was calculated by adding the percentage who identified as “anti-spiritual” and “anti-religious” (0.8 percent), “not spiritual” and “not religious” (12.6 percent), “somewhat spiritual” and “somewhat religious” (21.5 percent), “spiritual” and “religious” (22.5 percent), and “very spiritual” and “very religious” (9.3 percent).

Table 5

Percentage of Respondents within each Category of Religiousness and Harm Scale Scores

	Anti-religious	Not Religious	Some-what Religious	Religious	Very Religious
Score of 1 to 1.9	--	--	--	1.5%	1.4%
Score of 2 to 2.9	--	0.7%	--	0.3%	--
Score of 3 to 3.9	2.5%	0.3%	0.2%	0.6%	--
Score of 4 to 4.9	5.0%	0.6%	1.4%	1.3%	.7%
Score of 5 to 5.9	2.5%	3.0%	1.6%	3.1%	2.1%
Score of 6 to 6.9	2.5%	1.5%	1.3%	1.2%	5.7%
Score of 7 to 7.9	10.0%	5.1%	8.2%	4.8%	7.0%
Score of 8	77.5%	83.6%	84.5%	84.4%	83.0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 5 displays the percentage of respondents within each category of religiousness, crosstabulated by the harm scale. Most respondents, across all categories of religiousness, claim that they will not violate the harm moral foundation for any amount of money. Only 77.5 percent of anti-religious respondents say they would never commit harm for any amount of money, the smallest percentage of any religious category. However, the anti-religious category should be interpreted with caution because it contains so few respondents, only 3 percent of the total. All other categories of religiousness contain a similar percentage of respondents saying they would never violate the harm foundation for any amount of money. The other four religiousness categories vary from 83.0 percent to 84.5 percent, displaying very little variation. Very few

respondents are willing to violate the harm foundation for free, but all those with this response are either “religious” or “very religious.” However, percentages in these categories are so low, true differences between categories are better interpreted through linear regression.

Table 6

Percentage of Respondents within each Category of Spirituality, and Harm Scale

	Anti-spiritual	Not Spiritual	Some-what Spiritual	Spiritual	Very Spiritual
Score of 1 to 1.9	--	0.4%	--	1.3%	1.0%
Score of 2 to 2.9	--	1.2%	0.4%	--	--
Score of 3 to 3.9	--	0.4%	0.2%	0.2%	0.5%
Score of 4 to 4.9	--	2.0%	1.3%	1.0%	1.5%
Score of 5 to 5.9	--	5.2%	1.1%	2.4%	1.9%
Score of 6 to 6.9	15.4%	4.8%	4.4%	4.1%	5.3%
Score of 7 to 7.9	23.1%	8.0%	6.4%	5.2%	6.7%
Score of 8	61.5%	77.8%	86.2%	85.7%	83.3%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 6 shows the results of crosstabulation of spirituality with the harm scale. As with religiousness, most respondents, across all categories of spirituality, are loathe to violate the harm moral foundation for any amount of money. People who self-identify as “anti-spiritual” have the lowest percentage of “never for any amount of money” answers, but all results in the “anti-spiritual” category should be interpreted with caution because of the paucity of respondents in that category. Across the other categories of spirituality, there is more variation than there was

across categories of religiousness. Only 77.8 percent of “not spiritual” respondents would “never” violate the harm moral foundation, but 86.2 percent of “somewhat spiritual” respondents have the same response.

Very few respondents across any category of spirituality are willing to violate the harm moral foundation for free, or for very little money. In general, as the amount of money offered rises, the percentage of people willing to violate the harm foundation also rises. However, the people who are willing to harm for free are clustered in the “spiritual” and “very spiritual” categories, with a very small percentage willing to harm for free who identify as “not spiritual.”

Table 7

Percentage of Respondents within each Category of Religiousness and Fairness Scale

	Anti-religious	Not Religious	Some-what Religious	Religious	Very Religious
Score of 1 to 1.9	--	0.3%	0.9%	0.3%	2.1%
Score of 2 to 2.9	--	1.0%	0.7%	--	--
Score of 3 to 3.9	7.8%	3.0%	0.5%	2.3%	0.7%
Score of 4 to 4.9	2.6%	3.6%	3.6%	5.9%	1.4%
Score of 5 to 5.9	20.5%	1.2%	6.5%	4.9%	3.5%
Score of 6 to 6.9	5.1%	14.3%	14.3%	7.7%	7.1%
Score of 7 to 7.9	20.1%	20.7%	24.4%	12.7%	20.6%
Score of 8	43.6%	45.0%	49.1%	66.2%	64.5%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 7 shows how respondents in each category of religiousness responded on the fairness scale. The percentage of respondents in each category who said they would never violate the fairness foundation for any amount of money is significantly smaller than the same category in the harm scale. People who self-identified as “anti-religious” were least likely to claim that they would “never” violate the fairness foundation at only 43.6 percent. People who are “religious” are most likely to say they would “never” commit unfair action, at 66.2 percent. Likewise, many more Americans across the spectrum of religious self-identification are willing to violate the fairness foundation for small amounts of money, or no money. While Americans’ level of concern with fairness is high, they appear to be less concerned with fairness than with harm.

Americans who identify as “religious” or “very religious” seem to be significantly more concerned with violations of fairness than are all other Americans. The highest two categories of religiousness contain much larger percentages of people who will “never” violate the fairness foundation than all other categories. However, positive associations between the fairness moral scale and religiousness cannot be determined with confidence without linear regression.

Table 8

Percentage of Respondents within each Category of Spirituality and Fairness Scale

	Anti-spiritual	Not Spiritual	Some-what Spiritual	Spiritual	Very Spiritual
Score of 1 to 1.9	--	0.4%	1.0%	0.2%	1.4%
Score of 2 to 2.9	--	--	0.6%	0.4%	0.5%
Score of 3 to 3.9	7.1%	4.0%	1.2%	1.5%	0.5%
Score of 4 to 4.9	--	5.6%	3.0%	4.8%	3.3%
Score of 5 to 5.9	7.1%	7.6%	8.8%	3.9%	3.8%
Score of 6 to 6.9	--	12.8%	13.2%	11.8%	4.9%
Score of 7 to 7.9	50.0%	19.6%	22.7%	20.0%	15.4%
Score of 8	35.7%	44.0%	49.2%	57.5%	70.0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 8 displays a crosstabulation of the fairness scale, and respondents within each category of spirituality. The table seems to show that spirituality has a positive relationship with concern for the fairness moral foundation. Only 35.7 percent of “anti-spiritual” people would never violate the fairness foundation for any amount of money, but the percentage increases steadily with each increasing category of spirituality. At 70.0 percent, a wide majority “very spiritual” people refuse to violate the fairness moral foundation for any amount of money. The positive association between spirituality and concern for fairness is less clear, but discernible at other places in the table. For example, 7.1 percent of “anti-spiritual” Americans would violate the fairness foundation for one-hundred dollars, making “anti-spiritual” the group most likely to

choose that answer. In contrast, only 0.5 percent of “very spiritual” Americans, would violate the fairness foundation for \$100, making them least likely.

Table 9

Percentage of Respondents within each Category of Religiousness and Loyalty Scale

	Anti-religious	Not Religious	Some-what Religious	Religious	Very Religious
Score of 1 to 1.9	--	1.3%	0.7%	1.5%	1.4%
Score of 2 to 2.9	2.6%	5.0%	0.2%	--	--
Score of 3 to 3.9	2.6%	7.3%	2.3%	1.3%	--
Score of 4 to 4.9	38.5%	9.6%	5.6%	6.2%	6.5%
Score of 5 to 5.9	--	5.0%	6.1%	2.6%	1.4%
Score of 6 to 6.9	5.2%	12.6%	10.7%	9.3%	5.4%
Score of 7 to 7.9	7.7%	13.0%	14.5%	11.3%	7.9%
Score of 8	43.6%	46.0%	59.9%	67.8%	76.3%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 9 shows the percentage of respondents from each category of religiousness and their responses to the loyalty moral foundations scale. It seems that religiousness may have a positive association with loyalty scale scores. A full 76.3 percent of “very religious” Americans would not violate the loyalty moral foundation for any amount of money. The percentage of Americans who say that they would “never” violate the loyalty foundations decreases with each category decrease of religiousness, down to 43.6 percent of “anti-religious” people.

However, the possible positive association between religiousness and loyalty is not as clear in the rest of the table. For example, 14.5 percent of “somewhat religious” Americans would violate the loyalty foundation for one-million dollars or more, making the “somewhat religious” the largest percentage in the one-million-dollar category. More “not religious” people choose one-hundred-thousand-dollars than any other category of religiousness, and “anti-religious” people are most likely to choose to violate fairness for one-thousand dollars. Associations between religiousness and concern with loyalty cannot be determined definitively without linear regression.

Table 10

Percentage of Respondents within each Category of Spirituality and Loyalty Scale

	Anti-spiritual	Not Spiritual	Some-what Spiritual	Spiritual	Very Spiritual
Score of 1 to 1.9	--	1.6%	0.6%	0.6%	2.9%
Score of 2 to 2.9	--	6.4%	0.4%	--	--
Score of 3 to 3.9	--	4.8%	2.0%	4.3%	--
Score of 4 to 4.9	21.4%	12.3%	6.9%	6.7%	7.3%
Score of 5 to 5.9	--	4.8%	7.3%	3.0%	1.5%
Score of 6 to 6.9	--	11.1%	11.7%	10.7%	1.5%
Score of 7 to 7.9	28.5%	11.5%	13.1%	11.7%	12.3%
Score of 8	50.0%	47.6%	58.1%	63.0%	75.2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 10 displays the crosstabulation of each category of spirituality with loyalty scale scores. No associations between spirituality and concern for loyalty seem obvious. The percentage of people who will never violate the loyalty foundation for any amount of money ranges from 47.6 percent of “not spiritual” people to 75.2 percent of “very spiritual” people. While this may seem to define a trend in which more spiritual people care more about loyalty, “anti-spiritual” people do not fit the trend, and the rest of the table is muddled. For example, the percentages of people who would violate the loyalty foundation for free range from zero percent of “anti-spiritual” people to only 2.9 of “very spiritual” people, with no clear progression between.

Table 11

Percentage of Respondents within each Category of Religiousness and Authority Scale

	Anti-religious	Not Religious	Some-what Religious	Religious	Very Religious
Score of 1 to 1.9	--	1.3%	0.7%	0.5%	1.4%
Score of 2 to 2.9	14.6%	4.0%	1.4%	1.4%	--
Score of 3 to 3.9	12.2%	14.7%	6.5%	2.6%	5.8%
Score of 4 to 4.9	4.8%	11.0%	6.1%	7.0%	3.5%
Score of 5 to 5.9	29.3%	19.1%	14.4%	16.0%	3.6%
Score of 6 to 6.9	9.7%	9.0%	12.8%	11.3%	7.3%
Score of 7 to 7.9	17.1%	15.4%	19.2%	17.0%	19.6%
Score of 8	12.2%	25.4%	38.7%	44.5%	58.7%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 11 shows the percentage of people in each category of religiousness' authority scale scores. This table seems to show a positive association between religiousness and concern with the authority moral foundation. "Anti-religious" and "not religious" people seem to be willing to violate the authority foundation for less money, while "religious" and "very religious" people seem to require more money. For example, only 12.2 percent of "anti-religious" people would never violate the authority foundation, but 29.3 percent of them would do so for ten-thousand dollars, and 14.6 percent would do so for ten dollars. In contrast, 58.7 percent of "very religious" people would never violate the authority foundation, 3.6 percent of them would do so for ten-thousand dollars, and none of them would violate it for ten dollars.

Table 12

Percentage of All Respondents within each Category of Spirituality and Authority Scale

	Anti-spiritual	Not Spiritual	Some-what Spiritual	Spiritual	Very Spiritual
Score of 1 to 1.9	--	1.2%	0.6%	0.6%	1.0%
Score of 2 to 2.9	--	4.4%	1.7%	2.3%	--
Score of 3 to 3.9	7.1%	13.9%	7.8%	5.0%	3.4%
Score of 4 to 4.9	21.4%	11.5%	7.1%	6.3%	4.5%
Score of 5 to 5.9	21.4%	19.8%	16.7%	17.5%	6.0%
Score of 6 to 6.9	---	11.9%	11.8%	11.2%	9.3%
Score of 7 to 7.9	28.5%	13.4%	18.3%	17.6%	16.8%
Score of 8	21.4%	24.1%	35.8%	39.6%	59.1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 12 displays the authority scale scores and the percentage of people in each category of spirituality who chose that score. It appears that there may be a positive relationship between authority scores and spirituality, but the relationship should be confirmed by linear regression. The percentages of people who say that they will never violate the authority moral foundation for any amount of money increases with each increase in spirituality. Only 21.4 percent of “anti-spiritual” Americans say they would never violate the authority foundation, increasing to 35.8 percent of “somewhat spiritual” and increasing again to 59.1 percent of “very spiritual” people. However, the relationship between spirituality and authority scale scores is less clear throughout the rest of the table.

Table 13

Percentage of All Respondents within each Category of Religiousness and Purity Scale

	Anti-religious	Not Religious	Some-what Religious	Religious	Very Religious
Score of 1 to 1.9	--	0.7%	--	0.5%	1.4%
Score of 2 to 2.9	2.6%	1.4%	0.2%	--	--
Score of 3 to 3.9	7.9%	4.0%	1.2%	0.3%	--
Score of 4 to 4.9	21.1%	7.0%	2.7%	3.1%	6.3%
Score of 5 to 5.9	7.9%	8.0%	3.2%	4.6%	1.4%
Score of 6 to 6.9	21.1%	14.7%	9.5%	7.5%	8.4%
Score of 7 to 7.9	13.2%	22.1%	20.1%	16.1%	7.7%
Score of 8	26.3%	42.1%	63.0%	67.9%	74.6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 13 shows the percentages of people in each category of religiousness who chose each category of the purity scale. There appears to be a relationship between religiousness and concern with the purity foundation. Very few people are willing to violate the purity foundation for free or ten dollars. However, 7.9 percent of “anti-religious” people are willing to violate the purity foundation for one-hundred dollars, and 21.1 percent of them would do it for one-thousand dollars. In contrast, zero “very religious” people are willing to violate the purity foundation for one-hundred dollars, and only 6.3 percent are willing to for one-thousand dollars.

The percentages of people who are never willing to violate the purity foundation for any amount of money also seems to indicate a relationship between religiousness and purity scores. A full 74.5 percent of “very religious” people say that they would never violate the purity foundation, but only 26.3 percent of “anti-religious” people say the same. The percentage of people who would never violate the purity foundation decreases with each category decrease in religiousness. However, only the linear regression can determine whether the patterns that appear are statistically significant.

Table 14

Percentage of All Respondents within each Category of Spirituality and Purity Scale

	Anti-spiritual	Not Spiritual	Some-what Spiritual	Spiritual	Very Spiritual
Score of 1 to 1.9	--	1.2%	--	0.4%	1.0%
Score of 2 to 2.9	--	2.4%	0.6%	--	--
Score of 3 to 3.9	--	4.4%	1.0%	1.5%	--
Score of 4 to 4.9	15.4%	9.2%	3.3%	3.9%	3.9%
Score of 5 to 5.9	--	8.0%	4.1%	4.1%	3.4%
Score of 6 to 6.9	---	18.4%	6.9%	10.1%	6.3%
Score of 7 to 7.9	15.4%	19.1%	20.2%	17.2%	13.0%
Score of 8	69.2%	37.5%	60.9%	62.9%	72.6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 14 shows the percentages of people in each category of spirituality whose survey answers fall within each category of the purity scale. This table reveals no clear association between purity scale scores and spirituality. Generally, within each category of spirituality, increasing percentages of people said that they would require higher amounts of money in order to violate the purity foundation. However, differences between each category of spirituality are difficult to discern.

t-Test of the Anti-Religious and Anti-Spiritual Groups Against All Others

Examination of Tables 5-14 reveals that respondents who self-identify as “anti-religious” or “anti-spiritual” seem to be qualitatively different than all other respondents, including those

who identify as “not religious” and “not spiritual.” The number of participants who self-identify as “anti-religious” is only forty-one, and those who identify as “anti-spiritual” is even lower at thirteen. Because of the low N’s in these groups, I conducted a t-test which compared “anti-religious” respondents with respondents in every other category of religiousness across all five moral foundations scales. The same procedure was repeated, comparing “anti-spiritual” respondents with those in every other category of spirituality across all five moral foundation scales.

Table 15

t-Test Comparing “Anti-” Respondents with All Others

	T-test for Anti-Religious	T-test for Anti-Spiritual
Harm Scale	-1.600	.606
Fairness Scale	-1.953	-.138
Loyalty Scale	-2.946**	-.841
Authority Scale	-3.638***	-.135
Purity Scale	-5.007***	-.795

Levene’s test for equality of variance differed between the religious and spiritual groups. Across all five moral foundation scales, Levene’s test revealed that population variances between those who self-identify as “anti-religious” and those who identify with all other religious categories are not equal. However, means of the two groups are not statistically significant different on harm and fairness scales. The means of “anti-religious” people and all others are statistically significantly different on the loyalty, authority, and purity scales. Levene’s test shows that population variance is equal between those who self-identify as “anti-spiritual” and those who chose all other categories of spirituality. The t-test between “anti-spiritual” and all others does not reveal differences in means across any moral foundation scale.

The results of the t-test indicate that respondents who self-identify as “anti-religious” may be qualitatively different than all other respondents, especially in their acceptance of the politically conservative moral values of in-group loyalty, respect for authority, and purity. Although this dissertation is not focused on understanding the “anti-religious” group, this preliminary examination of anti-religiousness suggests that they may be more likely than even “not religious” people to reject conservative moral values. This result also suggests that participants do not treat “anti-religious” as simply the minimum level of religiousness, but instead as a unique category.

The N for these tests is very low, so the lack of qualitative difference between “anti-spiritual” and all other respondents is not definitive. However, it can be said that this t-test provides no evidence that “anti-spiritual” respondents are different than respondents within other spiritual categories. It seems as though the “anti-spiritual” category is seen by respondents as simply a continuation of the Likert scale progression, more emphatic than “not spiritual,” but not a qualitatively different category of spirituality.

Correlation Tables for All Variables

The following table, Table 16, presents Pearson’s *R* correlations between all variables without controls. Statistically significant correlations are shaded light gray.⁹

⁹ All other tables in this dissertation use asterisks to indicate the level of statistical significance. However, Table 15 requires the use of letters (A, B, and C) for this same purpose because of formatting constraints.

Table 16

Pearson's R Correlations between All Variables

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1	Religiousness	--												
2	Spirituality	.708 ^C	--											
3	Harm Scale	.031	.073 ^B	--										
4	Fairness Scale	.141 ^C	.158 ^C	.526 ^C	--									
5	Loyalty Scale	.232 ^C	.187 ^C	.420 ^C	.544 ^C	--								
6	Authority Scale	.267 ^C	.224 ^C	.387 ^C	.597 ^C	.562 ^C	--							
7	Purity Scale	.289 ^C	.246 ^C	.450 ^C	.491 ^C	.571 ^C	.538 ^C	--						
8	Gender	.127 ^C	.167 ^C	.147 ^C	.142 ^C	.158 ^C	.212 ^C	.191 ^C	--					
9	Age	.146 ^C	.105 ^C	.164 ^C	.260 ^C	.261 ^C	.237 ^C	.220 ^C	.036	--				
10	White	-.029	-.063 ^A	.017	.024	-.054 ^A	-.084 ^B	-.042	.022	.143 ^C	--			
11	Black	.107 ^C	.142 ^C	-.016	.022	.057 ^B	.105 ^C	.085 ^C	-.003	-.006	--	--		
12	Hispanic	-.023	-.019	.012	-.046	.033	.016	.018	-.016	-.142 ^C	--	--	--	
13	Other	-.029	-.046	-.026	-.012	-.005	.025	-.027	-.035	-.079 ^B	--	--	--	--
14	Mixed	-.041	.004	-.009	-.003	-.013	-.024	-.044	.019	-.016	--	--	--	--
15	Income	-.090 ^C	-.115 ^C	.037	.022	-.064 ^A	-.050	-.061 ^A	-.034	-.013	.137 ^C	-.128 ^C	-.092 ^C	.053 ^A
16	Education	-.091 ^C	-.013	.012	.035	-.130 ^C	-.042	-.089 ^C	-.014	-.014	.142 ^C	-.049	-.175 ^C	.047
17	Single	-.088 ^C	-.050	-.051	-.088 ^C	-.113 ^C	-.069 ^B	-.081 ^B	.030	-.142 ^C	-.097 ^C	.092 ^C	.061 ^A	.005
18	Married	.111 ^C	.059 ^A	.074 ^B	.134 ^C	.131 ^C	.099 ^C	.124 ^C	-.009	.210 ^C	.146 ^C	-.114 ^C	-.097 ^C	-.013
19	Partnered	-.050	-.021	-.048	-.095 ^C	-.045	-.062 ^A	-.088 ^C	-.038	-.143 ^C	-.100 ^C	.049	.074 ^B	.016
20	South	.116 ^C	.068 ^A	.003	.005	.074 ^B	.072 ^B	.049	-.008	.027	-.056 ^A	.098 ^C	.047	-.087 ^C
21	Northeast	-.044	-.039	-.033	.038	-.024	-.059 ^A	-.004	.025	.011	.040	-.014	-.053 ^A	.023
22	Midwest	.057 ^A	.059 ^A	.027	.030	-.018	-.010	.017	.003	-.008	.122 ^C	-.019	-.111 ^C	-.043
23	West	-.148 ^C	-.098 ^C	.000	-.001	-.043	-.016	-.068 ^A	-.017	-.033	-.095 ^C	-.078 ^B	.106 ^C	.119 ^C
24	Rurality	.124 ^C	.086 ^C	-.026	.002	.015	.018	.060 ^A	.026	.003	.146 ^C	-.069 ^B	-.092 ^C	-.046
25	Conservatism	.367 ^C	.208 ^C	.002	.079 ^B	.200 ^C	.139 ^C	.186 ^C	-.033	.151 ^C	.090 ^C	-.096 ^A	.003	-.010

^A $p < .5$. ^B $p < .01$. ^C $p < .001$.

(table continues)

(continued)

		14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
1	Religiousness												
2	Spirituality												
3	Harm Scale												
4	Fairness Scale												
5	Loyalty Scale												
6	Authority Scale												
7	Purity Scale												
8	Gender												
9	Age												
10	White												
11	Black												
12	Hispanic												
13	Other												
14	Mixed	--											
15	Income	-.026	--										
16	Education	-.025	.443 ^C	--									
17	Single	-.027	-.285 ^C	-.098 ^C	--								
18	Married	.012	.316 ^C	.118 ^C	--	--							
19	Partnered	.026	-.083 ^B	-.046	--	--	--						
20	South	-.014	-.089 ^C	-.051	.011	-.024	.025	--					
21	Northeast	-.009	.097 ^C	.041	-.017	.000	.033	--	--				
22	Midwest	-.036	-.031	-.003	-.026	.047	-.044	--	--	--			
23	West	.059 ^A	.041	.023	.029	-.020	-.014	--	--	--	--		
24	Rurality	-.044	-.121 ^C	-.079 ^B	-.030	.020	.016	.071 ^B	-.078 ^B	.134 ^C	-.142 ^C	--	
25	Conservatism	-.066 ^A	-.034	-.055 ^A	-.123 ^C	.145 ^C	-.051	.084 ^B	-.040	.015	-.072 ^B	.067 ^A	--

^A $p < .5$. ^B $p < .01$. ^C $p < .001$.

Table 16 shows Pearson's *R* correlations between all variables. Space constraints in this dissertation do not allow for a detailed description of each statistically significant cell of the table, but broad trends will be observed. Each moral foundation scale is statistically significantly associated with all other moral foundation scales, indicating that a person who shows high moral concern for one foundation is also likely to show high moral concern for another foundation, without controlling for other variables. As described previously in this dissertation, both religiousness and spirituality are statistically significantly correlated with all demographic variables used in this study. Previous literature was cited to justify the use of these control variables, and Table 16 also supports the claim that these control variables are necessary.

Linear Regressions

Five linear regressions were created using each of the five scales, each associated with a different moral foundation. The significance threshold was set at .05, the standard in social sciences. The regressions were created using weighted data, as described in the "Data" section.¹⁰ The total *N* for each linear regression was 1292.

¹⁰ Linear regressions were also tested with data that was not weighted, with results which are described in footnotes throughout this section.

Table 17

Linear Regression of Religiousness and Spirituality on the Harm Scale

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients
	B	Std. Error	Beta
Religiousness	-.085*	.037	-.093*
Spirituality	.051	.037	.055
Male	-.308***	.051	-.167***
Age	.009***	.002	.176***
Race (ref = White)			
Black	-.094	.085	-.032
Hispanic	.014	.076	.005
Other	-.024	.114	-.006
Mixed	-.106	.213	-.014
Income	.008	.007	.038
Education	.004	.014	.009
Marital (ref = single)			
Married	.124*	.058	.067*
Partnered	.109	.095	.033
Region (ref = South)			
Northeast	-.045	.074	-.019
Midwest	.018	.067	.008
West	.025	.069	.011
Rural	-.097	.070	-.039
Political Conservatism	-.007	.018	-.011
<i>Constant</i>	7.337***		
R ²	.074		
Adjusted R ²	.061		

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 17 shows the results of analyses regressing religiousness and spirituality on the harm scale.¹¹ Self-reported religiousness is a statistically significant predictor of respondents' answers on the harm scale, but self-reported spirituality is not. For each level increase in a

¹¹ When regressions are tested with unweighted data, neither religiousness nor spirituality has a statistically significant relationship with the harm scale, a result which differs from the result with weights. However, age continues to be positively associated with the harm scale, while being male continues to be negatively associated with the harm scale.

person's religiousness, their predicted harm scale score decreases by .085, controlling for other variables, indicating that the more religious a person is, the less money they would require in order to violate the harm moral foundation.

Among the control variables, gender, age, and marital status are also statistically significant predictors of the harm scale. Being male is predicted to decrease one's total harm score by an average of .308, indicating that males require less money than females to violate the harm foundation. A person's harm scale score is predicted to increase an average of .009 for with each year of age, suggesting that on average, older people are less willing to violate the harm moral foundation than are younger people. Married people are predicted to score an average of .124 higher than single people on the harm scale, signifying that married people are more concerned than single people with the harm moral foundation. Race, income, education, region of the country, and rurality are not found to be significant predictors of the harm scale. Political orientation is also not found to be a significant predictor, a result which is not unexpected, as liberals, moderates, and conservatives all are predicted to make moral decisions based on harm. The standardized coefficients reveal that age is the most predictive variable of harm scale scores, followed by closely gender. Religiousness and marital status are third and fourth most-important predictors of harm scale scores.

Table 18

Linear Regression of Religiousness and Spirituality on the Fairness Scale

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients
	B	Std. Error	Beta
Religiousness	-.011	.051	-.009
Spirituality	.102*	.050	.078*
Male	-.346***	.069	-.135***
Age	.016***	.002	.212***
Race (ref = White)			
Black	.221	.116	.054
Hispanic	-.080	.103	-.022
Other	.094	.155	.017
Mixed	-.037	.289	-.003
Income	-.001	.009	-.003
Education	.044*	.020	.068*
Marital (ref = single)			
Married	.265***	.079	.102***
Partnered	-.168	.129	-.037
Region (ref = South)			
Northeast	-.047	.100	-.014
Midwest	.050	.091	.016
West	.131	.093	.043
Rural	-.010	.095	-.003
Political Conservatism	.041	.025	.043
<i>Constant</i>	5.523***		
R ²	.120		
Adjusted R ²	.109		

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

The results of a linear regression analyzing the relationships between religiousness, spirituality, and the fairness scale are presented in Table 18.¹² The relationship between religiousness and fairness is not statistically significant, but spirituality and fairness are

¹² When the regression is tested with unweighted data, spirituality continues to have a positive relationship, and religiousness continues to have no statistically significant relationship, with fairness. Age and being married continues to have a positive relationship with fairness, and being male continues to negatively predict fairness scores. Without weighting, political orientation has no statistically significant relationship with the fairness scale.

positively correlated. For each level increase in a person's spirituality, their fairness scale score is predicted to increase by .102, controlling for other variables. This result indicates that the more spiritual a person is, the more they will value fairness in their moral decision-making.

Among the control variables, gender, age, education, and marital status are all statistically significant. On average, males are predicted to score .346 lower than females on the fairness scale. This signifies that males' moral decision-making is based less on fairness than females' decision-making. For each year of age, a person's predicted fairness score rises by an average of .016, showing that older people value fairness in moral decision-making more than younger people. Fairness scale scores are predicted to rise .044 for each increase in level of education. Married people are predicted to score an average of .265 more than single people on the fairness scale, indicating that married people are more concerned with the fairness moral foundation than are single people. Race, income, region of the country, and rurality were all found to not have a statistically significant relationship with the fairness scale. Political orientation is not predictive of fairness scale scores, unsurprisingly since moral foundations theory predicts that both conservatives and liberals value the fairness moral foundation. Examination of the standardized coefficients shows that age is the most influential variable on fairness scores, followed by gender and marital status. Education is the least predictive statistically significant variable.

Table 19

Linear Regression of Religiousness and Spirituality on the Loyalty Scale

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients
	B	Std. Error	Beta
Religiousness	.108	.061	.069
Spirituality	.034	.060	.021
Male	-.470***	.083	-.149***
Age	.017***	.002	.185***
Race (ref = White)			
Black	.263	.138	.053
Hispanic	.096	.124	.021
Other	.131	.186	.019
Mixed	-.149	.347	-.011
Income	-.027*	.011	-.075*
Education	-.057*	.024	-.071*
Marital (ref = single)			
Married	.428***	.095	.135***
Partnered	.239	.154	.043
Region (ref = South)			
Northeast	-.109	.120	-.027
Midwest	-.208	.109	-.056
West	-.087	.112	-.023
Rural	-.070	.113	-.016
Political Conservatism	.148***	.030	.140***
<i>Constant</i>	6.069***		
R ²	.156		
Adjusted R ²	.145		

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 19 shows the results of a linear regression examining the relationship between religiousness, spirituality, and the loyalty moral foundation.¹³ Neither religiousness nor spirituality was shown to have a statistically significant relationship with the loyalty scale.

¹³ Without weighting, religiousness has a positive, statistically significant relationship with loyalty scale scores. Age, marital status, and political conservatism continue to have a positive relationship with loyalty scale scores, while being male has a negative relationship with those scores. Without weighting, income is no longer a

Among the control variables, gender, age, income, education, marital status, and political orientation were statistically significant. Males were predicted to score on average .470 lower on the loyalty scale than were females, indicating that males are less concerned than females with loyalty when making moral decisions. Age was positively correlated with loyalty; a person's predicted loyalty scale score increases by .017 with each year of age. The loyalty score is predicted to decrease by an average of .027 for each category increase in income, suggesting that wealthier people make moral decisions based on loyalty less than poorer people. For each category increase in education, the predicted loyalty score decreases by .057, indicating that better-educated people are less concerned with the loyalty moral foundation. Married people are predicted to score an average of .428 higher on the loyalty scale than single people, suggesting that married people are more concerned than single people with loyalty as a moral foundation. Finally, for each category increase in political conservatism, loyalty scale scores are predicted to increase .148. Race, rurality, and region were the only control variables with no statistically significant relationship to the loyalty scale. The standardized coefficients show that age is again the variable which influences moral orientations most, this time the loyalty scale. Next most influential is gender, followed closely by political orientation, then marital status, income, and education.

statistically significant predictor of loyalty scores, but education gains a negative relationship with loyalty scores and being Black gains a positive relationship with loyalty scores.

Table 20

Linear Regression of Religiousness and Spirituality on the Authority Scale

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients
	B	Std. Error	Beta
Religiousness	.225***	.065	.133***
Spirituality	.073	.064	.042
Male	-.693***	.089	-.203***
Age	.018***	.003	.184***
Race (ref = White)			
Black	.625***	.149	.115***
Hispanic	.335*	.133	.069*
Other	.493*	.200	.065*
Mixed	-.141	.372	-.010
Income	-.023	.012	-.061
Education	.034	.025	.039
Marital (ref = single)			
Married	.270**	.102	.079**
Partnered	.004	.166	.001
Region (ref = South)			
Northeast	-.204	.129	-.046
Midwest	-.165	.117	-.041
West	.089	.120	.022
Rural	-.012	.122	-.003
Political Conservatism	.093**	.032	.081**
<i>Constant</i>	4.335***		
R ²	.174		
Adjusted R ²	.163		

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

The results of a linear regression examining the correlations between religiousness, spirituality, and the authority moral foundation are displayed by Table 20.¹⁴ Religiousness is

¹⁴ When the regression is tested with unweighted data, religiousness continues to positively predict authority scale scores, while spirituality continues to have no statistically significant relationship with authority. Age, gender, and marital status continue to predict authority scores in the same ways as when the data is weighted. Being Hispanic or Black continue to positively predict authority scores when unweighted, but the “other” racial category does not have a statistically significant relationship with authority scores. With unweighted data, political conservatism continues to have a positive relationship with authority scale scores.

statistically significantly associated with the authority scale, but spirituality is not. Respondents are predicted to score .225 higher on the authority scale for every category increase in religiousness, controlling for all other variables. This result signifies that the more religious a person is, the more they will express concern about authority as a moral foundation.

Among the control variables, gender, age, race, marital status, and political orientation were statistically significant. Males are predicted to score an average of .693 lower than females on the authority scale, indicating that males are less concerned with moral violations of authority than are females. Authority scale scores are predicted to increase by .018 with every year of age, signifying that older people are more concerned than younger people with authority as a moral foundation. As compared with white respondents, Black respondents are predicted to score an average of .625 higher, Hispanic respondents are predicted to score an average of .335 higher, and respondents who indicated their race was "Other" are predicted to score .493 higher on the authority scale. This result indicates that generally, racial minorities tend to be more concerned with violations of the authority moral foundation than are whites. Married people are predicted to score .270 higher than single people on the authority scale, suggesting that single people make more decisions based on authority less often than do married people. Authority scale scores are predicted to increase by .093 for every category increase in political conservatism. Income, education, region of the country, and rurality were all not statistically significant predictors of authority scale outcomes. The standardized coefficients reveal that the variable which is most predictive of authority scale scores is gender. Next most important is age, followed by religiousness, being Black, political conservatism being married, being Hispanic, or falling into the "other" racial survey category.

Table 21

Linear Regression of Religiousness and Spirituality on the Purity Scale

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients
	B	Std. Error	Beta
Religiousness	.068	.049	.054
Spirituality	.069	.048	.053
Male	-.405***	.067	-.159***
Age	.014***	.002	.184***
Race (ref = White)			
Black	.426***	.112	.105***
Hispanic	.151	.100	.042
Other	.168	.151	.030
Mixed	-.394	.280	-.037
Income	-.005	.009	-.016
Education	-.031	.019	-.048
Marital (ref = single)			
Married	.244**	.077	.095***
Partnered	-.089	.125	-.020
Region (ref = South)			
Northeast	-.033	.097	-.010
Midwest	-.129	.088	-.043
West	-.052	.091	-.017
Rural	.124	.092	.036
Political Conservatism	.114***	.024	.133***
<i>Constant</i>	6.091***		
R ²	.156		
Adjusted R ²	.144		

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 21 shows the results of analysis regressing religiousness and spirituality on the purity scale.¹⁵ Neither religiousness nor spirituality have a statistically significant relationship with the purity moral foundation, controlling for all other variables.

¹⁵ Without weighting, religiousness has a positive, statistically significant relationship with purity scale scores. Spirituality continues to have no statistically significant relationship with purity scores. Age, being married, being Black, and political conservatism all continue to have a positive relationship with purity scale scores when the data is unweighted. Being male continues to negatively predict purity scale scores with unweighted data.

Among the control variables, gender, age, race, marital status, and political orientation were all statistically significant. On average, males are predicted to score .405 lower than females on the purity scale, indicating that males are less likely to use the purity moral foundation than are females. A person's purity scale score is predicted to rise .014 for every additional year of age, signifying that older people are more concerned with purity than are younger people. Blacks are predicted to score an average of .426 higher on the purity scale than whites, indicating that Blacks are more likely than whites to make moral decisions based on purity. Married people are predicted to score on average .244 higher than single people on the purity scale, showing that married people are more concerned with moral purity than are single people. Purity scale scores are predicted to increase .144 with each category increase in political conservatism. Income, education, region of the country, and rurality were not statistically significantly correlated with the purity scale. Inspection of the standardized coefficients shows that the variable which is most predictive of purity scale scores is age, followed by being male. The next most important variables are political orientation, race, and marital status.

Discussion

Religiousness and spirituality proved to have statistically-significant, interesting relationships with moral orientations, though in unexpected ways. First, I discuss this paper's hypotheses, both their success and failure. Next, I describe the light this dissertation sheds on religiousness and morality, and then I examine spirituality and morality.

Hypotheses

The first hypothesis predicted that greater spirituality would be associated with greater concern for the harm/care moral foundation because previous research suggested that spirituality,

but not religiousness, is associated with empathy (Duriez 2004; Huber & MacDonald 2011; Markstrom, Huey, Stiles, & Krause 2010). This hypothesis was not directly supported, as the relationship between spirituality and the harm scale was not statistically significant. However, religiousness has a statistically significant, negative relationship with the harm scale, suggesting that on average, the more religious a person is, the more willing they are to violate the harm moral foundation according to their own self-reports.

The second hypothesis stated that greater religiousness would be associated with greater concern for the fairness moral foundation. However, religiousness is not a statistically significant predictor of fairness scale scores. Graham and Haidt (2010) argued that religious communities encourage believers to be fair to others because justice and fair distribution of resources are both necessary for communities to thrive. However, I found no evidence to support this claim. Perhaps shared respect for religious authority is the tie which binds religious communities more than a reliance on members' fairness to one another. It is also possible that religious people are willing to be fair to one another, but emphasize fairness less in their dealings with outsiders, two possibilities described in more detail below.

The third hypothesis predicted that higher religiousness would be associated with higher concern for the in-group loyalty foundation, another prediction which proved incorrect. Neither religiousness nor spirituality has a statistically significant relationship with scores on the in-group loyalty scale. This finding is extremely unexpected, as researchers have assumed for decades that religiousness is a function of group association as much as it is a function of belief systems. This finding calls into question the idea that religious Americans are more collectivist, while non-religious Americans are more individualist. Religion may provide believers with a

shared moral community, but it appears that believers do not value community loyalty any more than do non-believers.

The fourth hypothesis projected that religiousness would be positively associated with the authority scale, while spirituality would be negatively associated with it. This hypothesis proved only partially true, as greater religiousness predicts greater reliance on the authority scale, but spirituality does not have a statistically significant relationship with the authority scale. The findings in this dissertation support previous literature which finds that religiousness is strongly associated with authoritarianism (Bouchard 2009).

The final hypothesis tested by this dissertation stated that religiousness would be positively associated with concern with moral purity, a final failed hypothesis. Neither religiousness nor spirituality has a statistically significant relationship with the moral purity scale. Moral foundations theory researchers argue that purity is a “binding” value which religious communities use to help members feel connected with the group (Graham & Haidt 2010). According to this reasoning, group members may feel that purity laws and norms help them feel as though they belong to a morally elite group, a righteous minority with higher standards than the rest of the world. However, the findings of this dissertation do not support this claim; very religious people and non-religious people have similar purity concerns.

Religiousness and Morality

Two moral foundations had a statistically significant relationship with religiousness: harm/care and authority. Higher religiousness correlates with lower concern for the harm/care moral foundation, but higher concern for the authority moral foundation. Surprisingly, religiousness is not associated positive or negatively with the fairness, in-group loyalty, or purity foundations.

Religiousness and the harm/care moral foundation. This dissertation adds to the controversy existing in literature about the role of religiousness in prosocial behavior. Although popular opinion links religiousness with caring behavior, research on the topic can be divided into three competing branches: findings which support a positive relationship between religiousness and caring behavior (Francis 1987; Hardy, Walker, Rackham, & Olsen 2012); findings which show no relationship except in specific cases (Aghababaei, Mohammadtabar, & Saffarinia 2014; Duriez 2004; Markstrom, Huey, Stiles, & Krause 2010), and findings which support a negative relationship between the two (Huber & MacDonald 2011; Jackson & Esses 1997; Rowatt, LaBouff, Johnson, Froese, & Tsang 2009).

Contradictory research literature often indicates that current methodology is flawed, and many researchers have proposed solutions to the problem. Saraglou (2006) finds that the more religious people are in general, the more likely they are to respond to stressful situations with kindness rather than aggression. However, religious fundamentalists are more likely to respond with aggression, even though they perceive themselves as agreeable. Although Saraglou's research does not address the harm/care moral foundation directly, it suggests that research examining religion and morality may do well to understand religious Americans as two separate groups: fundamentalist and non-fundamentalist. Other research into helping behavior supports this methodology (Jackson & Esses 1997). The Measuring Morality survey does not ask Americans if they are fundamentalists or not, nor does it ask questions which could be used as a proxy for fundamentalism, such as Biblical literalism or belief in the inerrancy of holy texts (Kellstedt & Smidt 1991). Therefore, it is not possible for this research to determine whether harm/care scores vary by fundamentalism.

A second study also described by Saraglau (2006) finds that religious research participants were willing to help family members, colleagues and friends, but less willing to help strangers. In contrast, participants who described themselves as spiritual were willing to help others they knew and strangers equally. The author suggests that studies linking religiousness and altruistic behavior are weak because of confounding factors, including methodological problems in which the targets of empathy, stranger and non-stranger, are conflated. This study asks participants how much money they must be paid for them to be willing to harm either a dog or a child they don't know. Perhaps these research findings would be different if the harm scale included questions about harming someone close to the participant.

Another possible methodological solution is suggested by Allport's famous distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic religious motivation (1966). Intrinsic religiousness is a deeply-felt faith around which life is organized. In contrast, extrinsic faith is held only for its function for the believer, a means to an end, such as being part of a social group. Intrinsic faith is positively correlated with empathy, but extrinsic faith is associated with lack of empathy (Aghababaei, Mohammadtabar, & Saffarinia 2014; Watson, Hood, Morris, & Hall 1984). This dissertation only asked participants to rate their religiousness, with no mechanism for evaluating whether they were intrinsically or extrinsically religious. Perhaps this dissertation would have found that intrinsically religious people are not more willing to harm others, or perhaps not. Previous research shows that even intrinsically-religious people are less likely to help strangers they believe are gay than strangers they have not been told anything about, highlighting that the helping behavior of intrinsically-religious people is limited (Batson, Floyd, Meyer, & Winner 1999).

Researchers who find negative or no relationship between religiousness and caring behavior often criticize the methodology of the research which finds a positive relationship. Most of the criticisms of the hypothesis that religious people are more prosocial revolve around social desirability bias, religious people's desire to think of and portray themselves to others as more caring than they really are. Most research examining religion and morality is based on self-reported questionnaires, which religious people are thought to respond to with personally flattering answers, hypocrisy, or even outright lies. Some research attempts to prove that religious people have a higher-than-average desire to answer survey questions in socially-desirable ways, and so may appear more altruistic than they really are. (Decety et al. 2015). However, not all researchers agree, finding that religious people's friends, family, and coworkers describe them as more altruistic than non-religious people (Saraglou, Pichon, Trompette, Verschueren, & Dernelle 2005; Saraglou 2006). The findings presented in this paper fly in the faces of both viewpoints, as respondents to the Measuring Morality survey with high self-reported religiousness had higher self-reported willingness to harm others for money.

Religiousness and the authority moral foundation. This paper is only one of many written which explore the link between religiousness and authoritarianism. For example, we know that religious people are more authoritarian (Bouchard 2009; Saucier & Skrzypinska 2006); that religious people are less likely to promote democratic values because of their authoritarianism (Canetti-Nisim 2004); that religious people's authoritarianism is mediated by their religious maturity (Leak & Randall 1995); and that religious minorities are more supportive of authoritarianism than other minority groups (Belge & Karakoc 2015). A study of 119 twins who were separated to be raised in different homes suggests that not only is authoritarianism strongly associated with religiousness (as well as conservatism), but that these characteristics

may be heritable (Ludeke, Johnson, & Bouchard 2013). Fully 44% of the variation among the twins along these dimensions could be explained as genetic. The fact that religiousness is associated with respect for authority is not surprising; the unexpected finding in this dissertation is that respect for authority is the *only* moral foundation which is positively correlated with religiousness. The value a religious person places on respecting authority may help explain the surprising lack of positive correlations with the other four moral foundations.

Although Moral Foundation theorists hypothesize that other moral concerns are bolstered by religiousness, this dissertation does not support their ideas (Graham & Haidt 2010; Johnson et al. 2016). It may be that other moral foundations appear to be associated with religiousness only because religious people are more likely to submit to religious authority which demands adherence to moral rules which religious people would otherwise not show special concern for. For example, the assumption that religious and spiritual believers may express more concern about the purity moral foundation rests upon the fact that religious people are more likely than non-religious people to condemn behavior they perceive as morally polluting, such as homosexuality (Rosik, Dinges, & Saavedra 2013). However, this dissertation suggests that perhaps religious condemnation of homosexuality may be rooted in submission to the moral pronouncements of religious authority rather than moral purity, as religiousness is highly associated with the authority moral foundation and not at all with the purity moral foundation. Believers who value submission to religious authority may make moral decisions similar to those who value purity, but for different reasons. The same principle may apply to harm/care, fairness, and in-group loyalty, none of which are positively correlated with religiousness. The findings in this dissertation suggest that while the behavior of religious people may give the illusion that

they are highly concerned with harm/care, fairness, in-group loyalty, and purity, in reality all of these moral concerns are an artifact of their respect for authority.

A similar mechanism was suggested, not in reference to moral foundations theory, but by research testing Kohlberg's theory of moral development. Richards and Davison (1992) noted that religious conservatives were usually thought of as having less-mature moral development according to research using Kohlberg's theories. However, Richards and Davison showed that low moral development scores among religious conservatives were an artifact of their willingness to value God's authority (as they perceived it) more than their own moral judgment. Their research shows that conservative religious believers' concern with authority can change their moral reasoning such that moral values other than submission to authority become obscured, including harm/care and fairness.

Altemeyer and Hunsberger's (2005) research examining religious fundamentalism also supports this notion. They find that religious fundamentalists tend to be right-wing authoritarian first, and then their beliefs about issues like homosexuality and abortion follow. Religious fundamentalists generally grow up in homes that stress submission to parental, government, and religious authority above all else, attitudes which pave the way for allegiance to whichever moral values are being taught by authorities. However, the tendency of religiousness and authoritarianism to go hand-in-hand is not only a result of childhood socialization, but also genetics (Bouchard 2009; Ludeke, Johnson, & Bouchard 2013). Nature and nurture together encourage some people to value respect for authority, a personality orientation which leads to religiousness.

Spirituality and Morality

Spirituality has a statistically significant, positive relationship with the fairness scale, indicating that as a person's self-identified spirituality increases, their concern for the fairness moral foundation is predicted to increase as well. Spirituality had no statistically significant relationship with moral orientations other than fairness, a finding which has implications for understanding spirituality. Many theorists claim that some Americans are calling themselves "spiritual" rather than "religious" in order to emphasize their lack of ties with religious organization and their lack of respect for religious authority. For example, Zinnbauer et al. (1997) finds that many Americans define religiousness as membership to a religious organization, or commitment to dogma, and that those Americans are more likely to identify as "spiritual but not religious." Fuller (2001) also argues that "spiritual but not religious" Americans, whom he casts as spiritual seekers, only belong to religious organizations if they believe those organizations can help them fulfill their spiritual searches, but never out of a sense of obligation to those organizations. If Americans who emphasize spirituality over religiousness do not feel loyalty toward religious organizations nor respect religious authority, then one may expect that spirituality is negatively associated with the in-group loyalty and authority moral foundations. However, this data does not support this viewpoint. Americans who call themselves "spiritual" are not statistically significantly less concerned with either the in-group or authority moral orientations than are Americans who do not call themselves "spiritual." There are several possible explanations for this finding.

One explanation rests upon methodology. This dissertation distinguishes between degrees of spirituality while controlling for religiousness, but not distinguishing between degrees of religiousness. Future research may contrast the moral orientations of "spiritual but not religious"

Americans with the moral orientation of “spiritual and religious” Americans to discover whether Americans who embrace spirituality while rejecting religiousness rely less than average on the in-group loyalty and authority moral foundations. Although this paper did not distinguish between highly-spiritual religious people and highly-spiritual non-religious people, the percentage of Americans who identify as “spiritual but not religious” is 18 percent, a large enough group that they should be expected to influence associations found between spirituality and moral orientations if, in fact, “spiritual but not religious” Americans are anti-authoritarian and do not care about group loyalty (Pew Forum 2012).

Another explanation is that Americans who emphasize spirituality really are no less loyal or authoritarian than those that do not emphasize spirituality, and instead the distinction between those who call themselves “spiritual” and those who call themselves “religious” is rooted in a perception of fairness. Kinnaman and Lyons (2007) argue that people in the United States are rejecting religious organizations because they perceive the organizations as sexist, racist, and homophobic. Homosexual Americans tend to leave religious organizations, often retaining the core of the belief system and calling themselves “spiritual” (Hillier, Mitchell, & Mulcare 2008; Kubicek, McDavitt, Carpineto, Weiss, Iverson, & Kipke 2009). It may be that the trend toward spirituality is driven by concern about fairness and equality for all citizens regardless of gender, race, or sexual orientation.

Control Variables

Although the control variables used are not the focus of this dissertation, several clear, interesting patterns emerged within them which should be noted for future research. Age, gender, and marital status were significant predictors of each of the moral foundation scales. The research implications of associations with political orientation are also discussed.

Older people scored statistically significantly higher than younger people on all five moral foundation scales, and in fact, age was the most predictive variable of the harm, fairness, loyalty, and purity scales, and the second-most predictive variable of the authority scale. These findings suggest that Americans become more concerned with violations of moral values as they age, and that the differences in moral decision-making between older and younger Americans is far greater than the differences between conservatives and liberals. Most research using moral foundations theory emphasizes the influence of political orientation on morality, but political orientation differences are far less important predictors than age. If moral foundations theory research describes political differences without controlling for age, the research will exaggerate the importance of politics, as older Americans are more likely than younger Americans to be politically conservative (Truett 1993). It should also be noted that this result may suggest a new direction for moral foundations theory. Although previous moral thought often emphasized moral development over an individual's lifetime (most notably Kohlberg 1981), Moral Foundations theorists tend to treat moral orientations as though they are fixed at birth, driven more by evolutionary history than by individual growth and experience (Haidt & Graham 2007). It is currently unknown whether concern for all five moral foundations increases over the lifetime, or if conservatives and liberals follow different moral paths as they age. Further research could illuminate the role of aging on moral development.

Gender was the second or third most-predictive variable of harm, fairness, in-group loyalty, and purity scale scores, and was the most important variable predicting authority scale scores. Carol Gilligan (1982) theorized that males were more concerned with justice, while females were more concerned with caring for others. However, this dissertation finds a statistically significant, negative relationship between being male and all five moral foundations.

Being male strongly predicts less moral concern than being female, regardless of the moral concern in question, suggesting that males are more willing than females to violate every dimension of morality. While most previous research gender and morality focuses on gender differences in moral concern categories, the most prominent and least-studied difference between males and females may be in intensity of moral feeling (Jaffee & Hyde 2000; Sikula & Costa 1994). More research is needed to confirm and examine this finding in depth.

Being married is also a statistically significant predictor of all five moral foundations. In each case, married people express more concern about each moral foundation than do single or partnered people. Previous research on marriage and morality focuses exclusively on popular perception of moral issues associated with marriage, such as gay marriage, sex, cheating, gender roles within marriage, and feminism (Finnis 1997; Gaines & Garand 2010; Lewis 1988). However, these findings suggest a deeper relationship between marriage and morality – that marriage is one of several variables which predict moral decision-making across all moral foundations. While a plethora of research supports the notion that married people are more likely to be religious than their non-married counterparts (Bock & Radelet 1988; Chatters et al. 2008; Hertel 1988; Pew Forum 2012; Sherkat & Ellison 1999; Zhai, Ellison, & Stokes 2008), no research to date examines the association between being married and moral decision-making. Why would married people be more concerned than single and partnered people with every facet of morality? Does the marriage ritual encourage Americans to accept culturally-approved moral norms? Could the association between marriage and increased moral concern be a spurious effect created by a true association between having children and increased moral concern? Sociologists have long viewed marriage as an institution which strengthens society (Waite 1995); could this

effect be created as marriage shapes moral decision-making? Or are people with higher moral concern more likely to get married? Future research should answer these questions.

Although most researchers who use moral foundations theory focus almost exclusively on political orientation as a predictor of moral decision-making, this dissertation finds that the exclusivity of this focus may be misguided. I find that political orientation predicts morality, but it is not the most important predictor. Political orientation did not predict harm scale scores at all when controlling for other variables. Political orientation is not even among the top three most important variables predicting either fairness or authority scale scores. Political orientation is the second-most-important variable predicting in-group loyalty and purity scores, with age being the most predictive variable. While these findings support the idea that political orientation is correlated with moral decision-making, it is puzzling that current research focuses almost exclusively on a less-important predictor, politics, and virtually ignores more predictive characteristics such as age and gender. Theorists would do well to investigate the interesting insights moral foundations theory may bring to understanding all characteristics which influence moral decision-making, not only political orientation.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Summary

This dissertation examines associations between religiousness and spirituality, and moral orientations. I used the 2012 Measuring Morality dataset, which contains a representative sample of 1,519 Americans. The data included demographic characteristics, as well as their viewpoints on a wide variety of moral and social issues. Respondents' religiousness, spirituality, and moral orientations were scored using Likert scales, an operationalization which allowed for linear regression tests of association using a variety of demographic control variables as well as controlling for political orientation. Moral orientation survey questions were based on moral foundations theory, which divides moral decision-making into five categories of concern: harm, fairness, in-group loyalty, respect for authority, and purity.

Higher self-identified religiousness is associated with less moral concern for harm and more concern for respect for authority. This finding indicates that the moral behavior of religious people may be rooted in respect for religious authority, with all other moral concern emanating from submission to religious authority as each believer perceives it. Higher self-identified spirituality is associated with more moral concern for fairness. This finding may support other research which suggests that Americans are calling themselves "spiritual" rather than "religious" because they perceive religious organizations as unfair to ethnic and racial minorities, women, and people of non-traditional sexual and gender orientations.

Assumptions and Limitations

This study is a survey analysis therefore, it cannot examine the meanings behind Americans' self-identification with spirituality or religiousness in-depth. The Measuring Morality Survey only prompts respondents to give an answer on a Likert scale, but never probes the deeper meanings behind the words 'spiritual' and 'religious'. Ammerman's (2013) qualitative research interviewing a religiously diverse group of Americans helps researchers understand the ways in which people use the terms 'spiritual' and 'religious' in everyday life, and so helps fill the gap created by this survey analysis study. However, Ammerman's study also serves to illuminate one of the weaknesses of this study. Her study finds that different groups of Americans define the words 'religious' and 'spiritual' differently. For example, evangelicals are more likely to define 'spiritual' as associated with organizational belonging, while Catholics are more likely to define 'spiritual' as a mystical experience. This dissertation treats spirituality and religiousness as two coherent categories, making no distinction, for example, between two respondents who may mean very different things when they self-identify as 'religious and spiritual'.

Researchers have found that associations between religiousness and other variables (such as happiness and prosocial behavior) depend on whether their religiousness is intrinsic or extrinsic (Aghababaei, Mohammadtabar, & Saffarinia 2014). This dissertation uses the Measuring Morality dataset, which asked respondents to self-report their religiousness without any measures of whether that religion was intrinsic or extrinsic. More clarity could be brought to associations between religiousness and morality by a multidimensional operationalization of religiousness.

This research, by its nature, is limited in how much it can illuminate moral decision-making. With its moral judgment-centric approach this study is prone to all the weaknesses common to studies of this type, as described by Abend (2013). A survey of morality does not measure morality as it exists in the world, but instead demands that participants respond to an imaginary situation with armchair moralizing. It only elicits responses to disembodied actions, rather than to a more realistic scenario in which various people with different motives and a variety of motives act. The scenarios presented by the Measuring Morality survey are more straightforward and clear than the moral conundrums presented by everyday life. In this survey, moral dilemmas are resolved with “thin” categories of the amount of money a respondent would have to be paid in order to perform the action (Abend 2011). Although survey research is valuable for understanding morality, survey research results should not be misconstrued as illuminating the whole of morality.

Recommendations for Future Research

This dissertation suggests many avenues for future research. The answer to the research question, “How are religiousness and spirituality associated with moral orientations,” could be enhanced with the use of multidimensional measures of religiousness and spirituality. This dissertation relies upon unidimensional Likert scales of self-identification as religious or spiritual, but more complex operationalizations may find that moral orientations are associated with specific dimensions of religiousness and spirituality, such as prayer, meditation, literal interpretation of holy texts, worship attendance, integration within religious communities, fundamentalism, or something else. Future research may unpack the concepts of ‘religiousness’ and ‘spirituality’ more fully and understand morality better.

Relatedly, future research may go beyond aspects of religiousness and spirituality, as they are not the only valuable measures of faith whose relationships with morality may be analyzed. Although religiousness and spirituality are salient measures which help to capture some of the complexities of modern faith, future research may include measures outside of those two, such as acceptance of New Age ideas, tolerance, intensity of fervor, mysticism, superstitiousness, and many more. Because an individual's experience of faith is multidimensional, complex, and often contradictory, the potential avenues for academic investigation of the phenomenon are virtually limitless.

The interesting, consistent patterns found between some control variables and moral orientations also suggest future research. Age, gender, and marital status have large, consistent effects on moral decision-making, but all are understudied and therefore, not well understood. Respondents show more concern for all moral foundations as they age, suggesting moral development over the lifetime. Males are statistically significantly less concerned than females with all five moral foundations. Married people are more concerned with all five moral foundations than were single or partnered people. Moral foundations theory is currently not usually used to understand moral development with age, moral distinctions between genders, or the influence of marriage on individuals' moral behavior. Future research may emphasize these variables in order to explain morality more fully. Moral foundations theory, currently popularly known as a theory which helps explain moral differences between political liberals and conservatives, may be enlivened and enriched by the academic study of these other dimensions of morality.

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